

THE COMMON COLD

I. How often do you catch a cold? In which part of the year do you usually catch a cold?

II. What are the most common cold symptoms? Which of them do you usually suffer from?

III. What's the best treatment for a cold?

IV. Match.

1. stuffy/runny	a. throat
2. mild	b. sniffing
3. sore	c. illness
4. respiratory	d. congestion
5. be	e. nose
6. red, itchy	f. passages
7. nasal	g. fever
8. breathing	h. eyes

V. Fill in the blanks in the following paragraph on the difference between a cold and the flu

The flu and the common cold are both respiratory illnesses but they are ____1.____ by different viruses. Because these two types of illnesses have ____2.____ flu-like symptoms, it can be difficult to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone. In general, the flu is ____3.____ than the common cold, and symptoms such as fever, body aches, extreme tiredness, and dry ____4.____ are more common and intense. Colds are usually milder ____5.____ the flu. People with colds are more ____6.____ to have a runny or stuffy nose. Colds generally do not result in serious health problems, such ____7.____ pneumonia, bacterial infections, or hospitalizations.

VI. Listen and answer the following questions.

1. How many times do children usually catch a cold?
2. Why isn't it possible to become immune to colds?
3. Why do people get sick more frequently during the winter?
4. How does vitamin C help in treating colds?
5. How does chicken soup help in treating colds?
6. What did the doctor say about drinking and eating when you have a cold?
7. In what way can milk worsen a cold?
8. What do doctors recommend in general?

VII. Listen again and complete the missing words.

Cold weather and colds are so closely linked in our minds that it's usually hard to tell which came first. "We both feel somewhat 1. when it comes to the cold. We don't really know what to do." ("Daddy, I wasn't looking at the camera, I was just looking at my brother.")

Ben Hemmens is the father of three children, including four-year-old Sophie. According to medical experts, it is normal for kids around this age to catch a cold four to five times a year. In adults, the 2. is about two or three times a year.

Still, says Dr. Ranit Mishori, of Georgetown University Hospital, many people believe it's possible to become immune to colds. Unfortunately, she says, that's not the case. "There are about 200 different viruses that 3. the common cold and people think that once you get infected one time you develop immunity for the rest of your life. This is wrong."

There are many other common beliefs about colds that medical science does not support. How many of us believe the main cause of the common cold is 4. to cold temperatures? Even some studies have shown that people get sick more frequently during the winter.

But Dr. Mishori says it is not because of the cold weather. "It's because people tend to congregate and be together and the way the common cold virus is 5. from one person to another is through handshakes, through sneezing, or through coughing on one another."

While there is no actual cure for the common cold, Dr. Mishori says there are still a few things you can do to help 6. its duration and intensity. "We try to give them a lot of juice, a lot of orange juice because we think vitamin C helps kids get rid of the cold."

Though the medical community says Vitamin C does not help prevent colds, there is definitely some proof that it helps keep them from being as bad. "So if you get a cold on day one and you start taking about two grams of vitamin C a day there is evidence that it might 7. the number of days that you will be suffering with these symptoms."

In addition, medical science says honey and chicken soup are effective against colds. Especially honey. "There is increased evidence that it helps shorten the duration of the common cold sometimes even by two to three days particularly in children. Chicken soup has anti-inflammatory 8. so it helps reduce the duration of the cold but it also helps clear the mucus."

There's also a common belief that you should "feed a cold and starve a fever." Dr. Mishori says... not necessarily. "If you do have a cold and you don't feel like eating anything it's not going to 9. you but you have to drink a lot and you can drink water or you can drink tea – anything that gets fluids into your body. That's very important." ("I drank it all...")

So... if drinking fluids is a good idea What about milk? "I would never give milk to a child that's got bad phlegm in their throat because my son used to have that and he would 10. it up." Nadine Audrey, the Hemmens kids' grandmother, believes it's not a good idea to give milk to a child who has a cold.

Well, says Dr. Mishori, maybe and maybe not. "Dairy products do not cause increased secretions but they can thicken the secretions, so it's possible that the discomfort is somewhat more 11. when you drink milk but obviously if you are a baby and that's all you drink, you should not stop giving babies milk." There are many other myths about colds that do not pass scientific 12.. Doctors say the best advice is to continue using whatever works best for you. Even if it doesn't make the cold better, it won't make it worse either - while you wait for the cold to just run its natural course.