So You’ve Got a Cold

Here are some ideas to help you conquer your cold:

First of all you need to know that colds can last up to 2 weeks. Only about 2% of colds become bacterial infections such as sinusitis.

Mucus with color doesn’t always indicate a need for an antibiotic.

For **sinus congestion**, try generic Sudafed-PE. Keep in mind that this medication can keep you up if you take it late in the evening. Saline nasal spray can also help with congestion.

For **sinus drainage**, try generic Claritin during the day. Use Benadryl or Chlor-Trimeton in the evening due to the potential for drowsiness.

For a **sore throat**, try throat lozenges and/or spray; you can also use Tylenol or Ibuprofen. Gargling with warm salt water (1/2 tsp. of salt in 1 cup of warm water) may help with the discomfort.

For **fever**, be sure you are drinking plenty of liquids. Try Tylenol or Ibuprofen as a fever reducer.

For a **cough**, the pharmacy offers cough drops and a generic Robitussin DM. You may want to consider purchasing Mucinex or Delsym Cough Syrup off campus.

**REMEMBER to rest as much as possible!**

**When does my cold need further treatment?**

- Painful swelling of the neck glands
- Painful breathing, wheezing, or shortness of breath
- Severe headache
- Fever greater than 100.5°F for longer than 2 days
- White patches on the back of the throat or tonsils
- An extremely red throat
- Usual medications are not providing temporary relief
- Sore throat symptoms that have not improved in 2-3 days after a recent negative throat culture
What's in All Those Cough and Cold Medicines?

Have you ever walked the aisles of your drug or grocery store and been bewildered by the vast selection of over-the-counter (OTC) cough and cold medicines?

How do you know which medicine(s) to take for your symptoms?

Here's a list of the most common ingredients in OTC cough, cold and flu products for both children and adults, and what they do:

- **ACETAMINOPHEN**: a pain reliever and fever reducer for treatment of minor non-inflammatory conditions. An advantage is that it can be used in persons who are prone to stomach upset, which may occur with ibuprofen.

- **BROMPHENIRAMINE**: an antihistamine which helps relieve sneezing; itchy, runny nose; and red, itchy watery eyes due to allergy or the common cold.

- **CHLORPHENIRAMINE**: an antihistamine similar to brompheniramine, effective in relieving similar symptoms.

- **DEXTROMETHORPHAN**: a cough suppressant, or "antitussive" for treating uncomplicated, nonproductive ("dry") coughs.

- **GUAIFENESIN**: an expectorant which is thought to work by thinning and increasing lung secretions, making them easier to cough up.

- **IBUPROFEN**: a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medicine that relieves pain and reduces fever.

- **PSEUDOEPHEDRINE**: a decongestant that relieves nasal stuffiness due to allergy or the common cold.

A note about the decongestant PHENYLPROPANOLAMINE (PPA):

The Food and Drug Administration requested in November of 2000 that all drug companies discontinue marketing products containing PPA, a decongestant used in many cough and cold products and weight loss products. In response to a Yale University study that linked PPA to an increased risk of hemorrhagic stroke, the FDA is currently taking steps to remove PPA from all drug products. You should discard any products you have which contain PPA.

Read labels carefully and follow dosing directions! Various products may contain one or more of the same ingredients. You may inadvertently take too much of a medication or give your child too much.

Speak with your doctor or pharmacist or call the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222 if you have any questions about how much of these medicines to take or how often.