

# Is it a Cold or the Flu?

By Kate Craig, BSN, RN, CCH Infection Preventionist

Matt has a runny nose and sore throat. He's sneezing and he's been coughing, especially when he lays down at night. He thinks he might have had a fever, but didn't check it with a thermometer. He's been sick for about a week and he says today feels like he's starting to feel a little bit better.



**Influenza, however, feels and is much more serious. The symptoms come on quickly and the immune system doesn't have many resources left for other infectious threats.**



Matt is normally healthy so he will probably make a full recovery in the next couple of days.

Kate can hardly move around the house, she just wants to lie in bed. She's bundled in several layers and still cold under the comforter. She was fine yesterday morning, but by the afternoon she felt like she had been hit by a truck. She's had a temperature of 102 consistently for the last 24 hours and a dry cough. She says everything hurts, even her bones.

↑ Kate is normally healthy, but this illness has weakened her to a point that she is at risk for other infections.

**Matt has a cold.**  
**Kate has influenza.**

**A cold can still feel miserable, but usually the person can still do most of their normal activities without too much trouble.**

It is very important to wash your hands frequently during the cold and flu season. Cough or sneeze into a tissue or the inside of your elbow. Protect yourself from the flu by getting vaccinated at your local pharmacy, your healthcare provider's office or Campbell County Public Health.



**Flu vaccination is available at all CCMG clinics as part of a regular appointment or a specific immunization visit. The cost is \$40 for self-pay, or the clinic will file your insurance.**

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