

# Know Your Symptoms

## Understanding respiratory illness symptoms, testing, and treatment options

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Staying up to date with recommended vaccines is your best first line of defense; however, infections may still occur, so it is important to act quickly at the first sign of symptoms or a positive test. If you begin to experience symptoms, there are testing and treatment options available for you.

This is a guide to help you identify if you may be suffering from one of these infectious conditions; however, individual symptoms vary and the best course is always to consult a health care provider.

| SYMPTOMS                    | RESPIRATORY SYNCYTIAL VIRUS (RSV) <sup>1-3</sup> | PERTUSSIS (WHOOPIING COUGH) <sup>4,5</sup> | PNEUMOCOCCAL DISEASE <sup>6,7</sup>         | COVID-19 <sup>8,9</sup>           | INFLUENZA (FLU) <sup>10,11</sup>  |
|-----------------------------|--|--|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Fever</b>                | Low-grade  | Mild to moderate                           | High  | High                              | High, sudden onset                |
| <b>Cough</b>                | Persistent, wheezing                             | Severe                                     | Congested with mucus                        | Dry or productive                 | Severe, dry or productive         |
| <b>Runny Nose</b>           | Common   | Rare                                       | Sometimes                                   | Common                            | Sometimes                         |
| <b>Fatigue</b>              | Mild   | Mild                                       | Severe                                      | Severe                            | Severe                            |
| <b>Body Aches</b>           | Rare   | Rare                                       | Common                                      | Common                            | Common                            |
| <b>Difficulty Breathing</b> | Wheezing, rapid breathing                        | Fits of rapid coughing, trouble breathing  | Common, especially during physical activity | Sometimes, severe cases           | Sometimes, severe cases           |
| <b>Sneezing</b>             | Common   | Rare                                       | Rare  | Rare                              | Sometimes                         |
| <b>Vomiting/ Diarrhea</b>   | Rare   | Rare                                       | Rare  | Sometimes, especially in children | Sometimes, especially in children |

### COMMON TESTING OPTIONS

|  |  |   |  |   |   |
|--|--|---|--|---|---|
| <b>You may need to consult your healthcare provider for testing options.</b> | Nasal swab<br><i>(done at a doctor's office; sometimes available over the counter)</i><br><br>Chest X-rays<br><i>(done at a doctor's office)</i> | Nasal or throat swab<br><i>(done at a doctor's office)</i><br><br>Blood tests<br><i>(done at a doctor's office)</i> | Blood cultures<br><i>(done at a doctor's office)</i><br><br>Sputum cultures<br><i>(done at a doctor's office)</i><br><br>Urinary antigen tests<br><i>(done at a doctor's office)</i> | Nasal swab<br><i>(various testing options available over the counter)</i><br><br>Chest X-rays or CT scans<br><i>(done at a doctor's office)</i> | Nasal or throat swab<br><i>(various testing options available over the counter)</i> |
|--|--|---|--|---|---|

### TREATMENT

Consult a healthcare provider if you're experiencing respiratory illness symptoms. They can recommend the appropriate treatments, which may include medications or other therapies based on the severity of your symptoms and your overall health condition.

For some illnesses such as flu and COVID-19, antiviral treatments can help reduce the severity and duration of the illness. These treatments must be started within 5 days of when mild to moderate symptoms begin. It is crucial to contact your healthcare provider as soon as you test positive or begin experiencing symptoms to ensure you receive the appropriate antiviral medication in a timely manner.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/rsv/symptoms/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/drugs/19084-ribavirin-inhalation>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/rsv/hcp/clinical-overview/diagnostic-testing.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/pertussis/index.html>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/whooping-cough/diagnosis-treatment/drc-20378978>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/pneumococcal/signs-symptoms/index.html>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/pinkbook/hcp/table-of-contents/chapter-17-pneumococcal-disease.html>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/covid/signs-symptoms/index.html>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/covid/treatment/index.html>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/symptoms/symptoms.htm>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/symptoms/testing.htm>