

Nurses Nook....Is it a cold or the flu?

People sometimes get confused between cold and flu (Influenza) and have a hard time deciding when to keep their child home from school. In the initial stages of illness this can be especially difficult.

As a general rule of thumb the flu is accompanied by severe body aches and a fever. A cough and chills usually round out the symptoms. People with the flu are quite sick and reluctant to get out of bed as they are so fatigued. If you suspect you or your child has the flu please call your healthcare provider. You may be able to get antiviral medication to help fight the illness.

A cold may have similar symptoms but much less severe. Adults and older children with the common cold do not usually have a fever but younger children may have a mild fever. Someone with a cold is more likely to have head congestion and a runny/stuffy nose than a person with the flu.

If your child has a fever (a temperature above 100.4) or has had a fever within the last 24 hours, he or she should stay home from school. Checking for fever is only accurate if the child has not taken anything containing fever reducing medication (ibuprofen or acetaminophen) within the most recent six hour span.

For more on colds and flu please follow [this link](#).

And as always if you have any questions or concerns please feel free to call the nurse in your child's school.