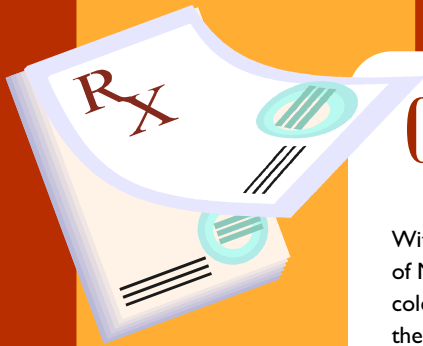


FALL  
2006

# Cold and Flu and You

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STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES WWW.MNSU.EDU/SHS



## Consider this Your Doctor's Note

Within the last school year, 19.3% of MSU students reported that the cold, flu, or sore throat affected their individual academic performance. This includes receiving an incomplete, dropping a course, or receiving a lower grade in a class, on an exam, or on an important project.

Graduate student, Jessica Raveling can tell it affects her performance,

“When I'm not feeling well, I just don't feel like going to class. Even if I do, I can tell that I'm not really absorbing what my teacher is saying.”

So should you force yourself to go to class when you're not feeling well? “Absolutely not,” says Student Health Services Director Christine Connolly. “We really encourage students,

faculty and staff to stay home when they're ill, otherwise that many more people are exposed and have the potential to get sick.”

Students are required to call or email their professor *before* class to let him or her know that you are ill. Contact Disability Services if you are experiencing an illness lasting two weeks or longer.

## Wash your hands. And your dishes and your clothes. . .

Why do I feel so stuffed up?

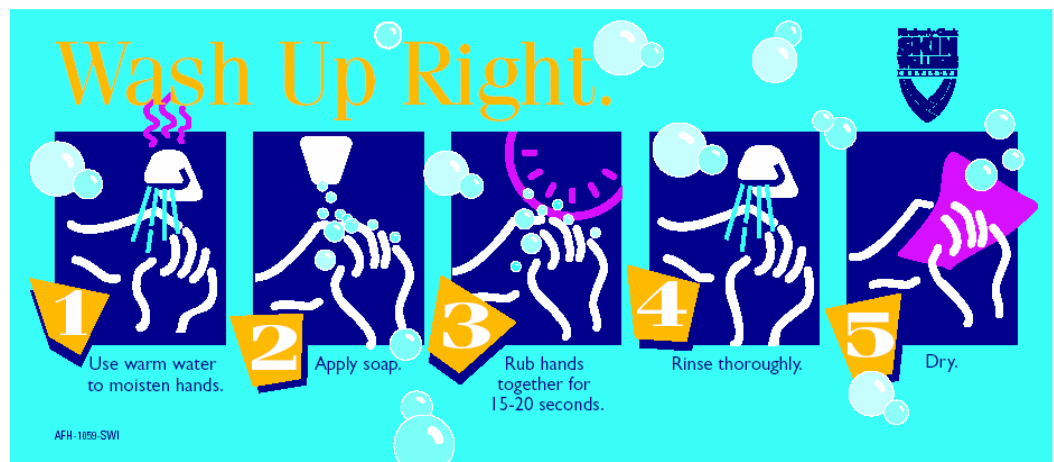
The cold virus triggers a release of chemicals that greatly increase the blood flow to the nose. This results in swelling, congestion, and lots of mucus.

We know that you can catch a cold from someone by swapping saliva, but viruses can also be transmitted by hand-to-mouth or hand-to-eye contact. Shaking and/or holding hands with an infected person can put the virus in contact with the eye or mouth of a non-infected person. It can also be passed by sharing lip gloss or drinking out of his or her glass.

Researchers have found that cold viruses can survive for several hours on hands, in cloth handkerchiefs and paper tissues, and on hard, non-porous surfaces such as kitchen counters, dishes, doorknobs, computer keyboards, and telephones.

- Be sure to always wash your hands. Often.

- Keep your hands away from your eyes, mouth, nose, and ears.
- Drink plenty of fluids, eat a healthy diet, and avoid being around people who are sick.
- Get plenty of rest and consider taking a multi-vitamin to cover your nutritional needs.



AFH-1059-SWI

# Is it a Cold? Or the Flu?

Symptoms	Cold	Flu
Fever	Rare	High (100.5-104 F); lasts 3-4 days
Headache	Rare	Prominent
General aches, pains	Slight	Usual; often severe
Fatigue, weakness	Quite Mild	Can last up to 2-3 weeks
Extreme exhaustion	Never	Early and prominent
Stuffy nose	Common	Sometimes
Sneezing	Usual	Sometimes
Sore throat	Common	Sometimes
Chest discomfort, cough	Mild to moderate; hacking cough	Common; can become severe

Unfortunately, going to the doctor doesn't cure the cold or the flu. The best medicine is to take care of yourself!

## Even College Students Need Sleep

When Wendy Schuh was in her first year of college, she remembers sitting in psychology class with her professor at the front. "He told us, 'give it 6 weeks . . . you'll all be in here sniffing and coughing.'" Sure enough several weeks later, many of her classmates were battling coughs, head colds, and sheer exhaustion.

Was this professor a mind-reader? Probably not.

College students are notorious for lack of sleep. In fact, almost 93% of Minnesota State Mankato students reported that they did not feel rested when they woke up in the morning every day the past week. And 86% felt exhausted at some point during the last year.

There are diminishing returns when college students try to pull all-nighters ~ including psychological maladjustment, lower GPA, and less creativity, not to mention irritability and feeling groggy!

And, contrary to popular belief, you cannot make up for sleep lost during the week on the weekends.



## Flu Shot—Available at a Clinic Near You



STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES  
MEDICAL PROVIDERS

Like, really near you. The flu vaccine is available at Minnesota State Mankato Student Health Services. Located below the cafeteria in Carkoski Commons, there are three medical doctors, two nurse practitioners, and three nurses available to help you prevent the flu this winter.

The single best way to prevent the flu is to get vaccinated. The "flu shot" is an inactivated vaccine (containing killed virus) that is given with a needle,

usually in the arm. The flu shot takes about two weeks after getting the shot for antibodies to start providing protection. Flu season can begin as early as October and last as late as May. The vaccines work by exposing your immune system to the flu virus. Your body will build up antibodies to the virus to protect you from getting the flu.

The flu shot contains dead viruses. You cannot get the flu from the flu shot or the nasal-

spray vaccine. Some people who get the vaccine will still get the flu, but they will usually get a milder case than people who aren't vaccinated. The vaccine is especially recommended for people who are more likely to get really sick from flu-related complications.

Be on the lookout for Student Health Services' Flu Clinic in October! The cost is around \$20 and it could be the best money you spend this year!