



SURVIVING COLD & FLU SEASON

Toolbox Talks for the members of Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities

Fall 2014

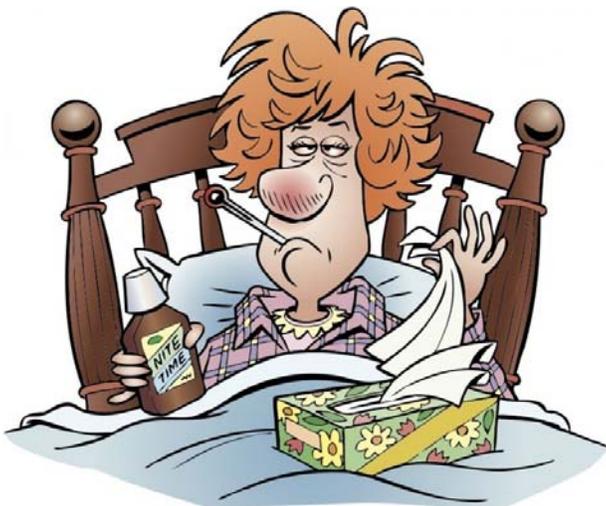
The common cold and seasonal flu are caused by viruses and have similar symptoms; sore throat, cough, congestion, body aches and fever. Antibiotics work only with bacterial infections & are not effective in fighting viruses. The following are tips from WebMD that may prevent the transmission of, or lessen the effects of, the cold or flu:

Wash your hands often with plenty of soap & water. Viruses are spread by living on the surfaces we touch & then are transferred to our eyes, nose or mouth. Washing knocks germs off your hands and down the drain. Make sure to lather well & scrub for at least 20 seconds.

Cover your cough. A cough or sneeze can propel viruses up to 6 feet to surfaces, where they can live for hours. Cover your nose & mouth with a tissue if you cough; if a tissue is not available, use your upper arm, never your hands. Put the used tissue directly into a waste basket.

If you are sick, avoid going to work, school or other public places. It may take longer to recover from colds or the flu if you push yourself. You also risk infecting others. Before you get sick make sure you have the supplies you need; tissues, decongestants, pain relievers, fluids, teas & simple comfort foods like chicken soup.

To help prevent the spread of viruses among family members, don't share eating utensils, drinking glasses or towels. Consider using disposables while a family member is sick.



- Get a flu shot. One simple vaccine may prevent a sickness that can sideline you for days or have severe consequences. It takes at least 2 weeks for the vaccine to take effect so make sure to get it as soon as it becomes available. It's a myth that the flu vaccine can give you the flu.

Drink plenty of fluids to prevent nausea and fever from dehydration and to help flush viruses from your body.