



## **RECOGNIZING THE DIFFERENCE**

Many times we question when it is necessary to seek medical attention. Often we visit our medical provider only to be told we have an upper respiratory infection, also known as a common “cold”. A cold is a viral infection of the nose, eyes, ear canals, mouth, throat, voice box or upper windpipe. An upper respiratory infection can last 10 to 14 days.

Cold symptoms include runny or congested nose with mucous color ranging from white to yellow to green. The nose symptoms are usually associated with postnasal drip, which causes two of the additional symptoms of a cold, sore throat and cough. You can use over the counter cold remedies according to the manufacturer’s recommendations.

The cough usually last beyond the cold itself and may take up to 4-6 weeks to resolve. **If a cough worsens or is associated with any breathing difficulty, you should seek medical attention right away.**

We also want you to seek medical attention when:

- There is fever (over 100.4) for 5 days or longer
- Temp over 104 that bounces right back after using Tylenol, Motrin/Ibuprofen
- Poor fluid intake and a change in urinary output
- Lethargy without a fever
- Neck pain or stiffness
- Specific site pain such as ear ache or joint pain that is worsening
- Cough worsening and causing respiratory distress or worsening after one week or lasting greater than four weeks

**If you have any questions or concerns, please call:  
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