


Do you know the difference between stomach flu and influenza?



“Stomach flu” is a popular term but not the true medical diagnosis. The proper medical term for stomach flu is gastroenteritis. Sometimes people mistake symptoms of stomach flu or gastroenteritis for the viral infection we commonly call “flu,” which has symptoms of fever, congestion, muscle aches, and fatigue. Learn more about stomach flu and influenza so you can recognize flu symptoms and seek proper treatment.

Influenza vs. Common Cold vs. Stomach “Flu”			
	Seasonal Influenza	Common Cold	Stomach “Flu”
	Caused by Influenza A or Influenza B viruses	Many different kinds of viruses such as rhinovirus, coronavirus, adenovirus, etc. NOT CAUSED BY INFLUENZA VIRUS	Norovirus (or Norwalk-like viruses) is the most common; however, there are many causes of stomach upset. NOT CAUSED BY INFLUENZA VIRUS
Prevention	Annual influenza immunization protects against the strains of influenza virus circulating that season	Cannot be prevented by immunization	Cannot be prevented by immunization
Involves whole body	Usually	Never	Never
Symptoms appear quickly	Yes	No. Symptoms appear gradually	Yes
Headache	Yes, and can be severe	Rarely	Sometimes
Chills, aches, pain	Yes, and often severe	Rarely	Common
Extreme tiredness	Yes, and may last two to three weeks or more	Rarely	Sometimes
Fever	Yes. High fever, beginning suddenly and lasting three to four days, is common	Sometimes	Rarely
Cough	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely

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