Respiratory viruses can cause the common cold and influenza-like illness. While you may be familiar with these illnesses - and have likely had them before - you may not be as familiar with all the different viruses that cause them.

**COMMON SYMPTOMS**
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Cough
- Sneezing

**FEVER**
- Headache
- Tiredness
- Body aches

**PEOPLE AT HIGHER RISK**
Though most people will only experience mild to moderate symptoms from a respiratory virus, some people may get seriously ill or even die. Those with weakened immune systems, infants, older adults, and those with existing lung or heart conditions are at a higher risk of developing severe illness.

**TRANSMISSION**
Respiratory viruses are primarily spread to others by respiratory droplets and aerosols that travel through the air when an infected person breathes, speaks, sings, coughs, or sneezes. They can also be spread by contact (like kissing or shaking hands) - either with the infected person, or by touching contaminated surfaces and then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes. These viruses can survive on surfaces for many hours.

**PREVENTION**
- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your face (especially mouth, nose, and eyes).
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.
- Disinfect objects and surfaces regularly (like door knobs, countertops, and light switches).

**LEARN MORE ABOUT THE DIFFERENT VIRUSES**

- Influenza
- Rhinovirus
- Parainfluenza
- Enterovirus
- Adenovirus
- Coronavirus
- Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)
- Human Metapneumovirus
Different types of respiratory viruses.

**ADENOVIRUSES**

There are more than 50 types of adenoviruses that can infect people.

**Symptoms**
Aside from the common respiratory symptoms, adenoviruses can also cause diarrhea, pink eye, bladder inflammation, and stomach/intestinal distress.

**Diagnosis**
Adenoviruses can be diagnosed by a health care provider using laboratory testing.

**CORONAVIRUSES*, RHINOVIRUSES, ENTEROVIRUSES**

There are 7 coronaviruses that can infect people. Sometimes coronaviruses that infect animals can change and make people sick, becoming a new human coronavirus. There are four seasonal coronaviruses, named HKU1, NL63, 229E, and OC43.

There are more than 100 rhinoviruses that can infect people. About 50% of common colds are caused by some kind of rhinovirus.

There are more than 100 enteroviruses that can infect people. Two particularly serious types of enteroviruses are called EV-D68 and EV-A71.

**Symptoms**
These viruses often cause what we think of as the common cold. Symptoms can include all of the common symptoms listed on Page 1.

**Diagnosis**
Clinical diagnosis is made based on symptoms. Laboratory tests are not routinely performed because a result would not affect treatment options.

*COVID-19 is a specific strain of coronavirus (also known as the novel coronavirus) that is more serious than seasonal coronaviruses. If you’re experiencing respiratory symptoms, get tested for COVID-19.

**RESPIRATORY Syncytial VIRUS (RSV)**

**Symptoms**
While most people with an RSV infection have mild illness, in some severe cases, breathing difficulties may develop that require hospitalization, particularly in infants and older adults.

**Diagnosis**
Laboratory diagnosis is usually not performed, although there are tests available through some Wisconsin laboratories.
Laboratory testing can tell you if you have the flu. Though rapid diagnostic tests are less reliable than PCR test options, they can give you results in 30 minutes or less.

Antiviral drugs (such as Tamiflu) are available and can help lessen symptoms, shorten the time you are sick, prevent serious complications, and stop the spread of flu. They work best when started within 48 hours of symptoms beginning.

Symptoms can include all of the common symptoms listed on Page 1.

There are two main types of influenza viruses that cause seasonal disease throughout the winter months — type A and B. There are many different strains of influenza viruses that change over time. That is why the flu vaccine is recommended each year.

Diagnosis
Laboratory testing can tell you if you have the flu. Though rapid diagnostic tests are less reliable than PCR test options, they can give you results in 30 minutes or less.

Treatment
Antiviral drugs (such as Tamiflu) are available and can help lessen symptoms, shorten the time you are sick, prevent serious complications, and stop the spread of flu. They work best when started within 48 hours of symptoms beginning.

Immunity
The most effective way to prevent getting sick with the flu is to be vaccinated with the flu vaccine every year.

There are four types of parainfluenza viruses that cause respiratory illnesses. They are most common in infants and young children, though anyone can be infected. Symptoms can include all of the common symptoms listed on Page 1.

Diagnosis
Parainfluenza can be diagnosed by a health care provider using laboratory testing.

There are four types of human metapneumoviruses that cause respiratory illnesses. They are most commonly diagnosed in young children, older adults, and people with weakened immune systems. Symptoms can include all of the common symptoms listed on Page 1.

Diagnosis
Human metapneumovirus can be diagnosed by a health care provider using laboratory testing.
# RESPIRATORY VIRUSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEASONALITY</th>
<th>Coronavirus Rhinovirus Enterovirus: Winter</th>
<th>Rhinovirus/Enterovirus: Spring and summer</th>
<th>Adenovirus</th>
<th>Parainfluenza</th>
<th>Influenza</th>
<th>Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)</th>
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<td>In addition to good hygiene, get your annual flu vaccine.</td>
<td>In addition to good hygiene, the drug palivizumab can prevent severe illness in those who are at high risk.</td>
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<td><strong>SYMPTOMS</strong></td>
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<td><strong>WHO'S AT-RISK</strong></td>
<td>Most people will only experience mild to moderate symptoms from a respiratory virus. Those with weakened immune systems, infants, older adults, and those with existing respiratory or cardiac diseases are at a higher risk of developing severe illness.</td>
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