**Achoo! [1]**

Week of:
Oct 06, 2017

**Do I have a cold or the flu? [2]**

Hi Alice,

I've been wicked sick all week with a really bad runny nose, face pain, cough and now my right ear is hurting. I can't think!! And I am trying to study for exams!!!

My mom told me I have the flu and should go to a doctor to get medicine to treat it. But I think it's just a wicked bad cold. Can you tell me the difference?

Thanks,
Faucet Nose

**When are colds contagious? [3]**

Dear Alice,

When is a person with a cold contagious? A couple of friends, who are put off when I keep my distance from their sneezing and coughing, insist one is only contagious a week or so before symptoms appear. In the back of my memory is the idea that one remains contagious until a few days *after* primary symptoms disappear. I'm not usually so concerned about this, but I'm coping with a couple of other annoying health problems and want to try to avoid adding a cold or flu to boot. I do the usual things news shows recommend - eat well, wash hands frequently. But when should one avoid others who have colds, or when should one stay isolated at home when one has a cold (or flu)?

Yours,
Healthy and wanting to stay that way

**Read more** [2]  [3]
Desensitization for allergies (immunotherapy) [4]

Alice,

A friend of mine is interested in desensitization therapy for cat allergy. He has consulted two allergists: one claimed a nearly 100 percent success rate; the other suggested the procedure was virtually worthless, and possibly dangerous. I suspect the truth lies somewhere between these two extremes. Is there any reliable information concerning the success rate for this procedure, what kinds of problems might be encountered, and how long one might expect it to take?

? Fur ball

Read more [4]

Allergies appear after relocation [5]

Dear Alice,

I relocated to a new area within the past six months. Since then, I have been experiencing congestion in the morning and pressure in my sinus area, such as stuffed nose and difficulty breathing, at night when I lay on my back and in the morning. Although I do not have a cold, I seem to always have a small amount of drainage on a daily basis. Within the past week, I am sneezing quite a bit in the mornings and at night, my eyes are so itchy I can't help but rub them to a nice shade of red. I have never had allergies before, just for your info. Thanks for any tips.

Read more [5]

Nasal spray junkie [6]

(1) Dear Alice,

I have had many (over eight) sinus infections in the last three years. The pain and discomfort associated with sinus congestion and infection has been extremely disconcerting. However, I have also found that my sinus congestion prevents me from thinking clearly. My thoughts are actually "cloudy" and incoherent when I'm congested.

I have found that VICKS Sinex 12 Hour Nasal Spray is the only thing that really helps me. Trust me, I have tried almost every prescription or over the counter product that there is. Its active ingredient is oxymetazoline (0.05 percent). Although the warning states that it should only be used for three days, I have been using it regularly for the last two weeks. What are the risks involved? Do the benefits outweigh the risks? I have only been experiencing minor side effects like an itchy and burning nose. These are side effects that I willing to tolerate. But are
there any more serious hazards?

Thanks,
? Nasal Spray Junkie

(2) Dear Alice,

I have been using nasal sprays for several years. It is the only thing that works for me on my swollen nasal passages. I've been to many doctors for this problem. I have yet to find one who can help me. I know that it is a bad idea to use nasal sprays for such a long time, but without it, I would not be able to breathe with my nose. I would love to get my nasal problem solved for good. I have had this problem all of my life and it is getting old.