**You can usually treat the flu without seeing a GP and should begin to feel better in about a week.**

**Check if you have flu**

Flu symptoms come on very quickly and can include:

* a sudden fever – a temperature of 38C or above
* an aching body • feeling tired or exhausted
* a dry cough • a sore throat
* a headache • difficulty sleeping
* loss of appetite • diarrhoea or tummy pain
* feeling sick and being sick

The symptoms are similar for children, but they can also get pain in their ear and appear less active.

**Telling the difference between cold and flu**

[Cold](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/common-cold/) and flu symptoms are similar, but flu tends to be more severe.

| **Flu** | **Cold** |
| --- | --- |
| Appears quickly within a few hours | Appears gradually |
| Affects more than just your nose and throat | Affects mainly your nose and throat |
| Makes you feel exhausted and too unwell to carry on as normal | Makes you feel unwell, but you're OK to carry on as normal (for example, go to work) |

**How to treat flu yourself**

To help you get better more quickly:

* rest and sleep
* keep warm
* take paracetamol or ibuprofen to lower your temperature and treat aches and pains
* drink plenty of water to [avoid dehydration](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/dehydration/#what-to-do) (your pee should be light yellow or clear)

**A pharmacist can help with flu**

A pharmacist can give treatment advice and recommend flu remedies.

Be careful not to use flu remedies if you're taking paracetamol and ibuprofen tablets as it's easy to take more than the recommended dose.