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COLD OR ALLERGY: WHICH IS IT?



ACHOO!

It's that time of the year again! You or your child has a runny nose, congestion and cough. You may be wondering, Is it a cold or Is it allergies.

Unfortunately, it's often hard to tell – even for doctors. But here is some information that may help. Read on to learn more about the causes and treatment of the “common” cold and allergy symptoms.

Colds are caused by hundreds of viruses. When one of these viruses gets into your body, your immune system attacks. The effects of this immune response are the classic symptoms of a cold, such as congestion and coughing. The germs that cause colds are contagious. You can pick them up when an infected person sneezes, coughs, or shakes hands with you. After a couple of weeks, your immune system fights off the virus and you stop having symptoms.

Allergies are caused by an overactive immune system. The body mistakes harmless substances – such as mold or pollen – for germs and attacks them. Your body releases chemicals called histamines, just as it does when fighting a cold.

This can cause swelling of the nasal passages, a runny nose, coughing and sneezing. Allergies are not contagious, although some people may inherit a tendency to develop them. Allergies can develop in anyone at anytime of their life.

If you are not sure whether your symptoms are cold or allergy related, refer to this table to see the differences.

Symptom	Cold	Allergy
Cough	Usually	Sometimes
Aches & Pains	Sometimes	Never
Fatigue	Sometimes	Sometimes
Itchy eyes	Rarely	Often
Sneezing	Usually	Usually
Runny Nose	Usually	Usually
Congestion	Usually	Usually
Sore throat	Often	Sometimes
Fever	Rarely	Never

As you can see, although colds and allergies may share some of the same symptoms, they are very different diseases. Those individuals who tend to get “colds” that develop suddenly and occur at the same time every year, may actually be suffering from seasonal allergies.

Treatment of a cold may include rest, pain relievers and over-the-counter cold remedies, such as decongestants and cough suppressants. Treatment of seasonal allergies may include over-the-counter or prescription antihistamines, steroid nasal sprays and eye drops, decongestants and avoidance of exposure to allergens when possible. Although cold and nasal allergy symptoms are rarely serious, they can sometimes lead to sinus infections. Colds may also lead to a middle ear infection.

If you think you might have a cold or allergies that seem severe, the best advice is to see your doctor. 🌐

Administration of Medication in School

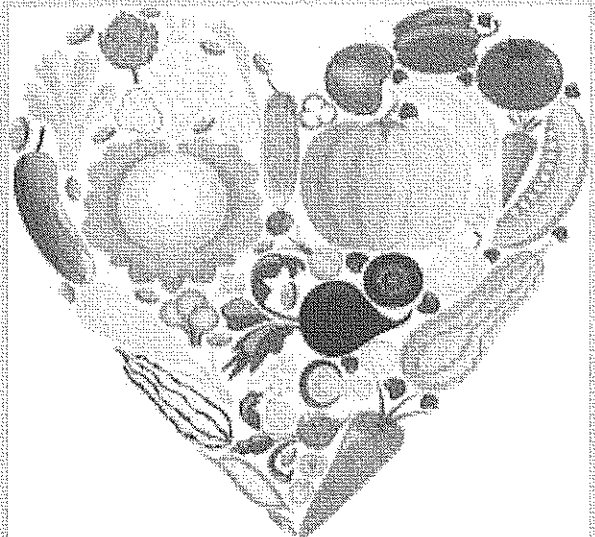
At some time in your child's educational experience in the Rutherford Public Schools, it may become necessary for him or her to take medication while in school.

Whether the medication is by prescription or over-the-counter, the following guidelines are to be adhered to so that the school nurse can administer your child's medicine appropriately. The policy of the Rutherford School District states:

- ✓ The parent/guardian must provide a written request for the administration of the prescribed medication at school. The form may be obtained from your child's school nurse.
- ✓ A written order is to be provided to the school from the private physician, and must have the diagnosis or type of illness, the name of the drug, dosage, time of administration and the side effects, whether the medication is by prescription or over-the-counter.
- ✓ The medication is to be brought to school by the parent or guardian in the *original container*, appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician with the student's name. Inhalers must have the pharmacy label on them.
- ✓ The school will provide a secure, locked space for the storage of all medication.
- ✓ The certified school nurse or parent/guardian are the only individuals to administer medication in school.
- ✓ The recording process is required to be maintained by the school nurse.
- ✓ The self-administration of medication for life-threatening illnesses such as asthma or allergies is permitted provided that certain conditions are met. Contact your child's school nurse.

Keep in mind that with the proper documentation from your physician, aerosol therapy can also be administered in the health office. A nebulizer is available in the school and in addition to providing the medication to be administered, tubing and a mask or mouthpiece labeled for your child should also be sent in.

Please do not send in medication of any kind with your child. It is in the interest of your child's safety and the safety of others that the above guidelines are followed. Feel free to contact Mrs. Frattarola at 201-438-7676, ext. 4263 or jfrattarola@rutherfordschools.org with any questions.



Super Foods

We all hear about "super" foods, but just what are they. These are foods that are loaded with protein, vitamins, minerals, anti-oxidants and other disease fighting properties. According to TLC, a Discovery Company, the following are considered "super" foods for children"

- Sweet potatoes
- Broccoli
- Whole grains
- Cheese
- Yogurt
- Tuna fish
- Berries
- Milk
- Eggs
- Beef
- Beans

There are many ways to introduce these foods into your child's diet. Check out new recipes online or in cookbooks. Be creative! A nutritious and balanced diet is the most important thing to ensure your child has a head start toward a healthy life. Here is a great website for some new recipes:

www.allrecipes.com

Remember – A written excuse from a parent or health care provider is required for an absence upon return to school. Illnesses or injuries treated by a physician require a note with any restrictions noted by the doctor. These notes will be kept on file. ✕