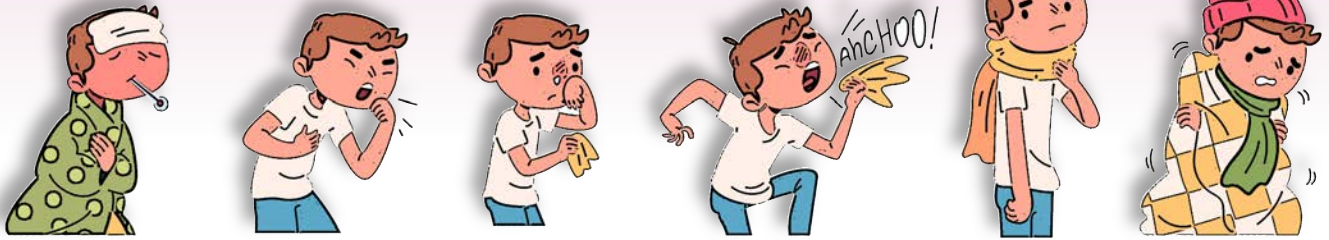


Is it a COLD, the FLU,

Crystal Maceira, CBP, LMT, MH

or ALLERGIES?



This is a question many people ask me about. All three of these ailments cause upper-respiratory-tract symptoms, making it difficult to distinguish between them. In this article, we will try to clarify which is which, so you can make more informed decisions.

WHAT IS A COLD?

A cold is a virus. It is an infection of the upper-respiratory tract. These viruses seem to attack the body during colder seasons, although it's not the weather that causes them (although less humidity can be a factor).

There are more than 200 viruses that can cause the common cold. They start to cause symptoms 18-to-24 hours after they enter the body.

The most common viruses are the rhinoviruses. Symptoms include: head congestion, nasal congestion, sore throat, coughing, headache, sneezing, and watery eyes. Children can develop a low-grade fever, but adults rarely do. The common cold can lead to more serious illnesses, such as bronchitis, a sinus infection, or ear infections. Most colds last from 7 to 10 days.

WHAT IS THE FLU?

Influenza is also a viral infection, but it is caused by different types of viruses. There are two types of influenzas—Type A and Type B—and here are their differences:

Host Range: Influenza A can infect humans, birds, pigs, and other animals. Influenza B primarily infects humans.

Severity: Influenza A typically causes more severe illness and is responsible for most flu-related hospitalizations and deaths. Influenza B tends to be milder but can still cause significant illness, especially in children.

Subtypes: Influenza A is divided into subtypes based on two proteins on the surface of the virus: hemagglutinin (H) and neuraminidase (N). There are 18 H subtypes and 11 N subtypes. Influenza B does not have subtypes but can be divided into different lineages and strains.

Seasonality: Influenza A usually appears earlier in the flu season (late fall to early winter). Influenza B tends to show up later (late winter to early spring).

Pandemics: Influenza A has the potential to cause pandemics because it can undergo significant genetic changes, especially when it jumps from animals to humans. Influenza B does not cause pandemics.

Both Type A and B flu types can cause epidemics and share similar symptoms, such as fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, and fatigue. However, influenza A is more common and tends to be more contagious and severe.



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The symptoms of influenza are body aches, cough, fatigue, headache, and fever with hot and cold flashes. They can cause nausea and vomiting, or diarrhea. The flu can last up to 12 days and take longer to recover from, with residual coughing and fatigue.

WHAT IS AN ALLERGY?

An allergy is when your immune system reacts to a substance that is typically harmless to most people. This substance is known as an allergen, and common examples include pollen, pet dander, certain foods, insect stings, and medications. When someone with an allergy comes into contact with an allergen, their immune system mistakenly identifies it as a threat and releases chemicals like histamines to fight it off. This reaction can lead to various symptoms, such as:

- Sneezing
- Swelling
- Skin rashes/hives
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Itchy or watery eyes
- Difficulty breathing

In some cases, allergies can cause more severe reactions, such as anaphylaxis, which is a life-threatening condition that requires immediate medical attention.

Allergies can be managed through avoidance of known allergens, with medications like anti-histamines, and in some cases, immunotherapy (allergy shots).

MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

I have only gotten the flu or a cold when my body is highly stressed, “run down,” or I have eaten too much junk food. When I avoid sugar, processed foods, or flour, then I don’t get a cold or the flu 99% of the time. When that occasional time comes that I do get one, or my husband comes down with a cold, then we have plenty of herbal remedies to get us back on track.

These are our favorite tinctures and remedies, which we make right here at **Positive Life Change, LLC** in Helena, Montana: **KVA (“Keep Viruses Away” Garlic Immune Herbal Formula Extract)**—based on the original by Dr. John Christopher), **Colloidal Silver**, **Grapefruit Seed Extract**, **Elderberry Syrup Plus**, and **Cayenne**.

Come see us at the **Made in Montana Trade Show** at the Fairgrounds, in Helena on March 8th if you are a retailer, and on March 9th if you are a consumer. We will be at booth 506.

I will also have classes in April and June in Townsend and Helena. Let me know which you are interested in for any of these: **Growing Your Own Medicinal Herb Garden**, **How to Make Tinctures and Salves**, and **What Is Iridology?** Email or text me for more information. ■



CRYSTAL MACEIRA is a Certified Bowenwork Practitioner, practicing in Helena. She has been a massage therapist for 23+ years. She is also a Master Herbalist and certified IIPA Iridologist. She prepares her own single and formula-blend herbal tinctures. Find out more on her website at: PositiveLifeChange.info. Call Crystal at 406-616-2599 Email: crystalclearhealth@gmail.com