

# GET THE FACTS

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## Common Cold

- **What are human rhinoviruses?**

- Human rhinoviruses (HRV) are some of the most common viruses associated with respiratory tract infections in children and infants. HRV may cause pneumonia in people with weakened immune systems, such as elderly. HRV are a frequent cause of the common cold, are a major trigger of asthma attacks, and have been associated with sinus and ear infections.

- **What are the symptoms?**

- Symptoms of HRV, as for the common cold, include sore throat, runny nose, coughing, sneezing, watery eyes, headaches, and body aches.

- **How long does this disease last?**

- Most people recover in about 7-10 days.

- **How are human rhinoviruses spread?**

- Rhinoviruses are spread by person-to-person contact, by self-ingestion from contaminated hands or spreading through contaminated air within a room.

- **Who is at risk for human rhinovirus infection?**

- Young children are at risk of developing significant disease related to viral upper respiratory infections (URIs) that are generally mild in other populations. Examples include influenza, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), parainfluenza, coronavirus, adenoviruses, and human metapneumovirus. Also, people with weakened immune systems, asthma, or respiratory conditions may develop serious illness, such as pneumonia.

- **What preventive measures and treatments are available?**

- There is no cure for HRV-associated cold. Infected individuals should drink plenty of fluids and get lots of rest. Over-the-counter medicines may relieve symptoms. Parents should always read the label and use medications as directed. Antibiotics will not cure the common cold since they do not work against viruses.

### **What should schools do?**

- Schools should take precautions that are used for Standard Droplet Prevention: Teach hand hygiene:
  - Encourage students to wash hands with soap and water, especially after coughing, sneezing, or blowing the nose.
  - If soap and water are not available, offer an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
  - Discourage from touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.



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- Encourage physical distancing:
  - School communities should be advised stay at home when they are sick.
  - Those who are ill should avoid close contact with others, such as hugging, kissing, or shaking hands.
  - Students should be taught to move away from people before coughing or sneezing.
  - Student should cough or sneeze into a tissue then throw it away, and if a tissue is not available, they should cough and sneeze into their upper shirt sleeve, completely covering their mouth and nose.
- Disinfect:
  - Disinfect frequently touched surfaces, and objects such as toys and doorknobs, and/or mobile devices.
  - Wear gloves when disinfecting the classroom or other common spaces.

For more information, visit [Common Colds: Protect Yourself and Others | Features | CDC](#) or [How is the Common Cold Spread? | Science Facts \(scifacts.net\)](#).

