

Is It Flu versus Cold versus Pertussis (whooping cough)?

Symptom	Influenza (Flu)	Cold (viral URI)	Pertussis
Fever	Usually present, high (102-104°F or 38-41°C); lasts 3-4 days	Uncommon	Uncommon, but usually low-grade if present
Headache	Very common	Uncommon	Uncommon
Aches and pains, muscle aches, chest discomfort	Common and often severe	Slight - moderate	Uncommon
Fatigue and weakness	Can last up to 14-21 days	Mild	Mild – moderate
Extreme exhaustion	Very common at the start	Never	Rare
Stuffy or Runny nose	Sometimes	Common	Common, early in the disease
Sneezing	Sometimes	Common	Common, early in the disease
Sore throat	Sometimes	Common	Uncommon
Cough	Non-productive (“dry”) cough is typical	Mild to moderate, hacking cough, often productive, usually resolves within 3-7 days. Usually responds to cough medications	Persistent cough, >1wk, of variable severity; can be very severe in infants and young children. Generally not responsive to cough medications
Paroxysmal Cough	Uncommon	Rare	Common