



**STURDY**  
MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**November 16, 2010**

**For More Information Contact**  
**Public Relations at 508-236-8020**

**OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE AT STURDY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL  
EXPLAINS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A COLD AND THE FLU**

ATTLEBORO, MA, November 16, 2010 – Suffering with symptoms such as coughing, sneezing, and a sore throat can put a damper on your day, but knowing the cause of these symptoms and what it indicates in terms of treatment is important for your health and the health of those around you. The following categorization of cold and flu symptoms can help you identify which of the similar respiratory illnesses you have, and corresponding recommendations provided by Occupational Health Service (OHS) at Sturdy Memorial Hospital will inform you of the most appropriate courses of action and treatment.

**Cold:**

In general, colds are milder than the flu. Symptoms, which typically last for about a week, begin with a sore throat; include a runny or stuffy nose, coughing, and sneezing; and sometimes come with a slight fever. Colds do not commonly result in serious health problems.

During the first three days that symptoms show, when colds are contagious, you should either stay home and rest or, if you do not have a fever, return to work or school but take measures to reduce the risk of spreading infection. Cover your mouth with a tissue, your arm, or the crook of your elbow when sneezing or coughing, and wash your hands frequently with soap and water. If soap and water are unavailable, use alcohol-based hand sanitizers.

**Flu:**

Usually more severe than the common cold, symptoms of the typical seasonal flu and H1N1 flu come on quickly and ease after two to five days with sustained tiredness for a week or more. Symptoms include fever, muscle aches, headache, fatigue, weakness, runny nose, sore throat, and dry cough. In particular, H1N1 flu is associated with vomiting and diarrhea. The flu can sometimes cause bacterial infections, pneumonia, or hospitalizations.

If you have the flu, stay home and rest to recover and spare others from infectious droplets that are emitted through sneezing and coughing. Although most people need a few days to recuperate from the flu, they can return to work 24 to 48 hours after their temperature has returned to normal.

**- more -**

## **Starve a Fever, Feed a Cold?**

This medical myth is false: fasting is never the answer when it comes to treating the flu or a cold. The key to getting better when you have either a cold or the flu is to eat a nutritional, well-balanced diet, which helps the body to fight off infections as well as to prevent illness in the first place. Over-the-counter decongestants and pain-reliever/fever-reducer medicines can help ease symptoms of both a cold and the flu.

If you have a persistent fever, congestion, or headaches; painful swallowing; or a cough that does not go away after two or three weeks, it is important to call your doctor. Critical symptoms such as severe chest pain, shortness of breath, or dizziness require that you seek emergency medical attention right away by either calling 911 or visiting Sturdy Memorial Hospital's Emergency Care Center, which is open 24 hours a day.

Sturdy Memorial Hospital is a full-service, independent, financially stable, not-for-profit acute care community hospital located at 211 Park Street in Attleboro, Massachusetts.

**###**