


## A comparison of allergies, the common cold, and the flu

	Seasonal allergies	Common cold	Flu
 Virus family classification	Not applicable	Common rhinovirus	Influenza virus
 Incubation period	Not applicable	24-48 hours	1-4 days
 Onset after exposure	Not applicable	Gradual over 1-6 days	Sudden <48 hrs
 Length of symptoms	2-3 weeks, depending on season	7-14 days without complications	3-7 days
 Severity of symptoms	Mild to severe	Mild, may be more severe in high-risk populations or if left untreated	Mild to severe, sudden onset
 Body aches & pains (myalgia)	Never	Occasional	Occasional
 Coughing	Varies, can develop or evolve to asthma	Common, varies in severity	Common
 Diarrhea	Never	Rare	Occasional, more common in young children
 Tiredness (malaise)	Occasional, can be attributed to treatment	Occasional	Common
 Fever	Never	Rare	Common
 Headaches	Occasional	Rare	Common
 Runny/stuffy nose (rhinorrhea)	Common, may evolve to sinusitis	Common	Occasional
 Shortness of breath (dyspnea)	Rare, may evolve if symptoms persist	Rare, may evolve if symptoms persist	Rare, may evolve if symptoms persist
 Sneezing	Common	Common	Occasional
 Vomiting	Never	Rare	Occasional