

Table 1: Some differences between the common cold, flu and Covid-19

		Cold	Flu	Covid-19
Symptom	Cough	May be present but only mildly	Dry in nature	New and continuous (coughing a lot for more than an hour or three or more coughing fits in 24 hours) or worse than usual
	Temperature	Sometimes	Yes	Raised
	Loss of smell or taste	Usually absent	Usually absent	Often present
	Other	Can include runny nose, i.e. affects mainly the nose and throat and sufferers can more or less carry on as normal despite feeling unwell	Can include achiness, sore throat, headache, sleeping problems, loss of appetite, diarrhoea, stomach ache, nausea and vomiting, and tiredness so severe that normal activities (e.g. work) are very difficult	Less common symptoms include achiness, fatigue, headache, conjunctivitis, sore throat, diarrhoea, discolouration of fingers or toes
	Important differentiating points	Shortness of breath is rare	Sneezing and shortness of breath are rare	Nasal symptoms are rare
Onset of symptoms		Gradual	Abrupt onset within 1-4 days of exposure	Gradual onset to 14 days after exposure
Duration of symptoms		7-10 days	5-7 days	14 days if mild, but considerably longer for some