CORONAVIRUS, FLU, COLD?

As the number of coronavirus cases rise, there are some key differences that set the coronavirus apart from the seasonal flu and the common cold, mainly the intensity of the symptoms and the recovery period.

All three, however, are spread by respiratory droplets and contaminated surfaces.

CORONAVIRUS	**SEASONAL FLU**	**COMMON COLD**
SYMPTOMS:	**SYMPTOMS:**	**SYMPTOMS**
• FEVER • DRY COUGH • MUSCLE ACHE • FATIGUE	• FEVER • DRY COUGH • MUSCLE ACHES • FATIGUE • HEADACHE • *SORE THROAT* • *RUNNY OR STUFFY NOSE*	• *RUNNY OR STUFFY NOSE* • SNEEZING • *SORE THROAT*
LESS COMMON SYMPTOMS	**LESS COMMON SYMPTOMS**	**LESS COMMON SYMPTOMS**
• HEADACHE • COUGHING UP BLOOD	• DIARRHEA • VOMITING	• LOW GRADE FEVER • MUSCLE OR BODY ACHES • HEADACHE • FATIGUE
INCUBATION	**INCUBATION**	**INCUBATION**
• 1-14 DAYS (MAY GO UP TO 24 DAYS)	1-4 DAYS	2-3 DAYS
COMPLICATIONS	**COMPLICATIONS**	**COMPLICATIONS**
5 % OF CASES MAY SEE ACUTE PNEUMONIA, RESPIRATORY FAILURE, SEPTIC SHOCK AND/OR MULTIPLE ORGAN FAILURE	10%- INCLUDING PNEUMONIA	EXTREMELY RARE
RECOVERY	**RECOVERY**	**RECOVERY**
• 2 WEEKS - MILD CASES	• 1 WEEK MILD CASES	1 WEEK MAYBE AS LONG AS 10 DAYS
• 2-6 WEEKS FOR SEVERE CASES	• 2 WEEKS FOR SEVERE CASES	
TREATMENT OR VACCINE:	**TREATMENT OR VACCINE**	**TREATMENT OR VACCINE**
NO VACCINES OR ANTI-VIRAL DRUGS ARE AVAILABLE; ONLY SYMPTOMS CAN BE TREATED	ANNUAL SEASONAL FLU VACCINE IS AVAILABLE	NO TREATMENT BUT DOCTORS ADVISE TREATING SYMPTOMS

Similarities: COVID-19 and the Flu

Symptoms

- Both cause fever, cough, body aches, fatigue
- Can be mild or severe, even fatal in rare cases.
- Can result in pneumonia.

Transmission

- Both can be spread from person to person through droplets in the air from an infected person coughing, sneezing or talking.
- Flu can be spread by an infected person for several days before their symptoms appear, and COVID-19 is believed to be spread in the same manner, but we don't yet know for sure.

Treatment

- Neither virus is treatable with antibiotics, which only work on bacterial infections.
- Both may be treated by addressing symptoms, such as reducing fever. Severe cases may require hospitalization and support such as mechanical ventilation.

Prevention

Both may be prevented by frequent, thorough hand washing, coughing into the crook of your elbow, staying home when sick and limiting contact with people who are infected.

Differences: COVID-19 and the Flu

Cause

COVID-19: Caused by one virus, the novel 2019 coronavirus, now called severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2, or SARS-CoV-2.

Flu: Caused by any of several different types and strains of influenza viruses.

Transmission

While both the flu and COVID-19 may be transmitted in similar ways (see the Similarities section above), there is also a possible difference: COVID-19 might be spread through the airborne route, meaning that tiny droplets remaining in the air could cause disease in others even after the ill person is no longer near.

Antiviral Medications

COVID-19: Antiviral medications are currently being tested to see if they can address symptoms.

Flu: Antiviral medications can address symptoms and sometimes shorten the duration of the illness.

Vaccine

COVID-19: No vaccine is available at this time, though it is in progress.

Flu: A vaccine is available and effective to prevent some of the most dangerous types or to reduce the severity of the flu.

Infections

COVID-19: Approximately 113,579 cases worldwide; 607 cases in the U.S. as of Mar. 9, 2020.

Flu: Estimated 1 billion cases worldwide; 9.3 million to 45 million cases in the U.S. per year.

Deaths

COVID-19: Approximately 3,995 deaths reported worldwide; 22 deaths in the U.S., as of Mar. 9, 2020.

Flu: 291,000 to 646,000 deaths worldwide; 12,000 to 61,000 deaths in the U.S. per year.

The COVID-19 situation is changing rapidly. Since this disease is caused by a new virus, people do not have immunity to it, and a vaccine may be many months away. Doctors and scientists are working on estimating the mortality rate of COVID-19, but at present, it is thought to be higher than that of most strains of the flu.