

Differences between allergies, cold, flu and COVID-19*

With COVID-19 overlapping with part of the flu season and allergy season, it can be hard to know what your symptoms are telling you. There are some main symptoms that are different between allergies, COVID-19, cold and the flu, but it's easy to get them confused since they have similarities. If you have never had allergies and are experiencing symptoms, or you normally have allergies but are experiencing new or unusual symptoms, please speak with a healthcare provider or use the online provincial COVID-19 self-assessment tools that can be found on [Pharmasave.com](https://www.pharmasave.com).

Symptoms	Seasonal allergies (starts with triggers such as dust or pollen)	COVID-19 (could start in 2-14 days)	Cold (gradual start)	Flu (rapid start)
Fever	None	✓ Common	Sometimes, rare	✓ Common
Cough	Sometimes (asthmatic, or due to post-nasal drip)	✓ Common	Sometimes, mild	✓ Common
Shortness of breath	Sometimes (asthma/COPD flares)	Sometimes	None	None
Runny or stuffy nose	✓ Common	Sometimes, rare	✓ Common	Sometimes, mild
Sneezing	✓ Common	Rare	✓ Common	Rare
Sore throat	Itchiness	Sometimes	✓ Common	Sometimes
Red, watery or itchy eyes	✓ Common	Rare (pink eye)	Sometimes (pink eye)	Rare (pink eye)
Fatigue	None	Sometimes	Sometimes, mild	✓ Common
Headache	Rare (due to nasal congestion)	Sometimes	Sometimes, mild	✓ Common
Aches and pains	None	✓ Common	Sometimes, mild	✓ Common
Loss of appetite	None	✓ Common	Reduced	✓ Common
Diarrhea	None	Sometimes	None	Sometimes
Length of symptoms	Days to duration of allergy season	7-25 days **	Less than 14 days	7-10 days

*The table does not contain complete information on each condition or diagnosis. The information is not meant to replace any information or advice that your healthcare provider has provided to you. You should call your pharmacist or speak to your healthcare provider if you have any questions. **or longer depending on severity