

COVID-19 vs. Flu

Some say COVID-19 is like the flu. But we say, not so fast!
Here's a breakdown of the similarities and differences.

	COVID-19	FLU
Symptoms		
Severity	No symptoms (asymptomatic) to severe	Mild to severe
Time to appear	2–14 days	1–4 days
Unique symptoms	Dry cough, shortness of breath, change in or loss of taste or smell	Many flu symptoms are also symptoms of COVID-19
Risk		
Average Risk	Everyone	Everyone is at risk, but vaccination decreases that risk
High Risk	Older adults, pregnant people, those with a history of smoking and those with underlying medical conditions, such as cancer, chronic kidney disease, COPD, down syndrome, heart conditions, obesity, sickle cell disease and type 2 diabetes	Older adults, people with other health conditions, pregnant people and children under 5
Transmission		
Through respiratory droplets	Yes	Yes
By touching surfaces first, then eyes, nose, or mouth	Yes	Yes
Prevention		
Vaccines	Yes, there are currently two FDA authorized vaccines	Yes, a new one each year
Testing		
Can be confirmed by a test	Yes	Yes
Treatment		
Prescriptions	The FDA has issued emergency use authorization for monoclonal antibodies to treat mild to moderate COVID-19	Antiviral medications shorten the duration and ease symptoms
Over-the-counter medications		For symptom management
Mortality		
As of January 27, 2021	1.6%*	0.1%

The actions we take to prevent the flu work against COVID-19 as well. These include frequent hand-washing, social distancing, disinfecting surfaces, and covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue or sleeve.