Almost one billion people catch a cold and more than 200,000 people catch the flu every year in the United States. However, there are some steps you can take to keep you and your family healthy during cold and flu season. **The best ways to prevent illness is to:**

- Get a flu shot.
- Wash your hands frequently.
- Avoid touching your nose and eyes.
- Do not share utensils or towels at home.
- Stay home when you are ill

The common cold and flu are respiratory illnesses caused by different viruses. The common cold produces mild symptoms usually lasting only 5-10 days. **Symptoms of a cold include:**

- Runny nose
- Sneezing
- Nasal and sinus blockage
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Cough

Sometimes it is difficult to tell the difference between a cold and the flu by symptoms alone but in general the flu is worse than the common cold. **Symptoms of flu include:**

- Fever
- Body aches
- Extreme tiredness
- Dry cough
- Chills
- Sweating
- Muscle and body aches
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- High fever (greater than 102°F)

Please remember if your child has any of the above symptoms please keep them Home to prevent other children from becoming ill. When your child does need to go home from school, please try to pick them up as soon as possible to avoid the spread of further infection.