Comparison of COVID-19, influenza, common cold, and gastrointestinal (GI) illness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>COVID-19*</th>
<th>Influenza (Flu)</th>
<th>Cold</th>
<th>GI Illness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cause</strong></td>
<td>SARS-CoV-2 virus</td>
<td>Influenza A or influenza B viruses</td>
<td>Many viruses</td>
<td>Many viruses (Norovirus is the most common)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Symptoms appear quickly</strong></td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Immunization</strong></td>
<td>COVID-19 vaccine</td>
<td>Influenza vaccine</td>
<td>No vaccine</td>
<td>No vaccine</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Symptoms**

- **Fever**
  - Sometimes
  - Common
  - Rare
  - Sometimes

- **Chills**
  - Common
  - Common
  - Sometimes
  - Sometimes

- **Fatigue**
  - Sometimes (more common in older adults)
  - Common
  - Sometimes
  - Sometimes

- **Cough**
  - Common
  - Common
  - Common
  - No

- **Sneezing**
  - Common
  - Sometimes
  - Common
  - No

- **Aches and pains**
  - Common
  - Common
  - Sometimes
  - Sometimes

- **Runny or stuffy nose**
  - Common
  - Common
  - Common
  - No

- **Sore throat**
  - Common
  - Common
  - Common
  - No

- **Diarrhea**
  - Common
  - Sometimes (especially for children)
  - Rare
  - Common

- **Nausea/Vomiting**
  - Sometimes
  - Sometimes (especially for children)
  - Rare
  - Common

- **Headaches**
  - Common
  - Common
  - Rare
  - Sometimes

- **Shortness of breath**
  - Common
  - Sometimes
  - No
  - No

- **Loss of smell or taste**
  - Common
  - No
  - No
  - No

*COVID-19 symptoms are different for everyone. You may not have all of these symptoms. This is not a complete list of symptoms for COVID-19.

[ahs.ca/immunize](https://ahs.ca/immunize)

Sources: Provincial Immunization Program, Alberta Health Services.