**Colds**

The common cold is an infection of the nose, throat, ears and sinuses caused by one of hundreds of viruses. Because a virus causes the common cold, practitioners will not prescribe antibiotics unless they feel there is a bacterial infection. For people who are healthy, this is usually not a serious condition, and symptoms typically go away in 7-10 days. Symptoms can include a runny nose, sneezing, sore throat, cough, body aches and fever. Coughing, sneezing, or touching hands easily spreads cold viruses from person to person.

**Home care**

- Rest & drink plenty of fluids
- Consume hot tea & chicken soup to relieve congestion
- Take Ibuprofen or Acetaminophen for fever, sore throat & body aches
- Humidify bedroom to aid in sleeping
- Wash hands frequently
- Treat symptoms such as congestion or cough with over-the-counter decongestants or cough syrup

**Seek professional care if:**

- High fever of shaking chills
- Facial pain, headache, thick green or yellow mucous
- No improvement in 2-3 weeks

**Prevention:**

- Frequent handwashing
- Get plenty of sleep, eat well and exercise to keep immune system strong