

Have a bad cold? You are not alone. Here's why we could be seeing a worse cold season this year

December 13 2021, by Sriya Reddy



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Craig Hoffman's two-year-old son, Roky, came down with a cold a week before Thanksgiving after coming back from school. As a family, the

Hoffman's have been pretty careful, yet Roky's cold quickly spread to the whole family.

"One kid's got a cough, next kid's got a cough, and then mom and dad got a cough," said Hoffman..

The Hoffmans' experience is one of many this cold season. Dr. David Winter with Baylor Scott and White in Dallas said that he's seen an increase in cases of the common cold this year.

"We were expecting to have a terrible cold season because last year was minimal," Winter said. "Because last year everybody was masking and distancing and staying home. So we built up little natural immunity."

Winter said that natural immunity occurs when you are exposed to a virus, as opposed to immunity which occurs through vaccinations.

He said that he's seen an increase in the common cold at his clinic.

"We're seeing several a day," Winter said. "We've seen an increase in the last couple of weeks."

In Hoffman's experience, he and his family had a cough, runny nose, sore throat and itchy eyes. He said that although his family didn't get sick very often, this cold did feel a little different.

"It wasn't any worse than other colds. It didn't knock me down," Craig said. "But, I mean, it definitely was kind of grueling. It's like 'OK, I should be better by now.'"

Winter said that people who exhibit cold symptoms may have something other than the cold virus. He said that people with just a cold are more likely to have sneezing and congestion. However, people with the flu are

more likely to have fever, muscle aches, body aches, chills and sweats. Mild cases of COVID-19 could also present as [cold symptoms](#).

"If you've been vaccinated for COVID and you get COVID, it's a mild illness for the most part, and it resembles the cold," Winter said. "I've seen several people that I thought probably had a cold virus, but we tested and they've got COVID-19. So if you have symptoms, I would suggest you stay home."

According to a release from Parkland Health and Hospital System, it takes longer for COVID-19 symptoms to present than symptoms from the flu or the common cold. Also, those with COVID-19, will be contagious for longer while the flu and the [common cold](#) recovery period is usually between seven to ten days.

"Contracting both flu and COVID-19 at the same time is very possible – and that's something no one would want to experience," said Dr. Manisha Raja with Community Medicine at Parkland in the release. "Fortunately, flu and COVID-19 vaccinations are easily available, safe and effective. The CDC also says it's safe to get both shots at the same time."

With [family gatherings](#) coming up, many doctors recommend taking precautions to not get sick.

"In addition to getting flu and COVID vaccinations, we can reduce the risk of getting sick this [winter](#) by washing our hands often, avoiding close contact with [sick people](#), and not touching our face with unwashed hands," Raja said. "Most importantly, if you're sick, stay home."

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