

# Summer Flu

One of the few differences between a summer cold and a winter one is the **strain of virus** that causes it. Another difference is the difficulty recognizing if it is a cold or just a typical summertime allergy.

**H**ow does one tell if it is a summer **flu bug** or simply an allergy? The difficulty is telling the difference between the symptoms. Both a summer flu and **hay fever** cause runny noses, coughing, congestion, **fatigue** and headaches. An allergy, usually improves with antihistamines and getting indoors away from the cause. Anyone who gets a summer flu feels worse than in winter, because flu doesn't seem right when the sun is shining and people are going around eating ice creams.

**Pharmacy customer:** Hallo.  
PTA: Hallo. Was kann ich tun?

**Sorry, I don't speak German.**  
No problem! How may I help you?

**I have a tickly cough, stuffy nose and a headache. I took an antihistamine yesterday and it didn't seem to help. And I'm really tired!**

Is it possible that you could have the flu?

**The flu! In summer? I thought the tiredness was caused by the antihistamines.**

While antihistamines do make some people a little **drowsy**, there is a flu bug doing the rounds at the moment. Quite a few children at the local primary school are down with the flu.

**My next-door-neighbour has two children, one in kindergarten and the other in the second grade and she told me they both had a cold.**

Quite a lot of people get the summer flu without even realizing it. They usually think it's an allergy or a number of other reasons. These people only have a minor version of the summer flu.

**I see. I also have slight diarrhoea. Do you think that might also be a symptom?**

Certainly! You see a lot of the summer flu viruses are caused by enteroviruses. Summer cold-related viruses may be spread by the fact that people don't wash their hands frequently enough or not correctly after using the toilet.

**I thought that people can only get gastric flu in the winter.**

Of course, but the viruses have a much better chance of surviving and **breeding** in summer.

**What do you recommend I do? Go to my doctor?**

I recommend you some OTC products. As soon as you notice a temperature or start **wheezing** you should go to your doctor immediately.

**What can you give me?**

Here is paracetamol, this will help the headache and any **joint pain** you might experience. This here is a very effective decongestant nasal spray that should help you relieve your stuffy nose. What I can also recommend is **nasal irrigation** with an isotonic **saline solution**, which is great for **loosening** any **mucous**.

**Do you mean using a solution of cooking salt in water?**

Not really. You can gargle with a **tepid** solution of salt in water to **relieve** your throat, but these sachets of salt are isotonic and have exactly the right composition for the purpose. Do you have a **nasal irrigator**?

**No. Are they expensive?**

Not at all!

**Can I do anything else?**

Getting **plenty of rest** and drinking fluids is essential.

**Thank you, I will.**

I wish you a speedy recovery. Goodbye. ■

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## VOCABULARY

flu	(ugs.) Influenza, Grippe
strain of virus	Virenstamm
flu bug	(ugs.) Grippevirus
hay fever	Heuschnupfen
fatigue	Müdigkeit, Mattigkeit
tickly cough	Reizhusten
drowsy	schläfrig
gastric flu	Magen-Darm-Grippe
breeding	sich vermehren
wheezing	Atemgeräusch
	zum Beispiel bei Asthma
joint pain	Gliederschmerzen
nasal irrigation	Nasenspülung
saline solution	Kochsalzlösung
loosening	lösen
mucous	Schleim
tepid	lauwarm
relieve	lindern
nasal irrigator	Nasendusche
plenty of rest	viel Ruhe