

# Cough

- A cough is most often caused by viruses in adults.
- A cough may be present with other symptoms of a respiratory tract infection (Common Cold) such as fever, sore throat and nasal congestion.
- Coughs are most often due to a virus with symptoms usually lasting 7-14 days.
- Some coughs may last 3-4 weeks.



## Symptoms:

- Cough that may produce mucus (mucus may be clear, white, yellowish-gray or green)
- Other symptoms of the Common Cold (including nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat)
- Fatigue

## Limit spread to others:

- Cover your cough using the crook of your elbow
- Wash your hands frequently
- Avoid intimate contact
- If you have a fever stay home ( or in your residence hall) and away from others until fever-free for more than 24 hours (temperature should be less than 100 degrees Fahrenheit without medication)

## Self-care measures:

- Rest
- Drink plenty of non-alcoholic fluids
- Avoid cigarette smoke
- Use a humidifier
- Use over-the-counter cough medication containing Dextromethorphan and/or Guaifenesin(\*)
- Use cough drops(✓) as needed to help control a frequent cough.
- Use self-care guidelines for symptoms of Upper Respiratory Tract Infection as needed.

## When to seek care from a medical provider:

- Cough lasts more than one week
- Cough prevents you from sleeping
- Chest pain
- Cough produces blood (more than streaks in the mucus)
- For wheezing or shortness of breath
- Fever

*Items marked with a (\*) are available after being evaluated by a Nurse in the Health Services Office (Commons, Room 226).*

*Items marked with a (✓) are available in the Self-Care Room.*