Is it a Cold or the Flu?

This year is different because H3N2 is the main strain of flu and has a higher intensity of symptoms, more frequent hospitalizations and deaths.

Here are some of the differences between a cold and the flu. Some symptoms are present in both cold and flu; however, there are some very clear signs of the flu:

- **Flu symptoms are usually more intense**: you have muscle and body aches, which can be severe; colds may have body aches, but are usually less severe
- **Flu symptoms appear quickly**: colds develop more slowly; with the flu, you can go from well to sick within a few hours
- **Your body feels more run down with the flu**: you feel completely exhausted and it can last for weeks; you can force yourself to go to work with a cold
- **If you think you have the flu, see a doctor as soon as possible** for a prescription like Tamiflu, which can help reduce the time you have the illness; however, you must get treatment within the first 48 hours of the onset of flu symptoms
- **Other recommendations**:
  - get plenty of rest
  - stay hydrated (drink a lot of water)
  - eat well and include soups which is an easy way to get a lot of nutrients without a lot of cooking
  - use a humidifier to help you breathe easier
- **If your symptoms get worse, go back to your doctor** for additional treatment.
- **High fevers of 103 or 104 degrees Fahrenheit are serious** and can lead to other illnesses like bronchitis, pneumonia and sinusitis.

Adapted from the Health section of Huffington Post, 1-30-18