

# Warmer winter has less flu cases, but more cold and allergy symptoms

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Chesapeake, Va. - Typically flu season hits hardest in February, but warmer winter weather has us seeing less cases of the flu.

"First of all not having people in close quarters, inside sharing germs, people are outside enjoying the weather," says Dr. Rebecca Franzi-Osborne, Medical Director at Patient First in Chesapeake. "Plus, the flu virus itself doesn't tend to survive in the warmth."

But that doesn't mean people are getting sick.

"Lots of colds," says Osborne, "most of what we're seeing is viral, which is frustrating for patients because there aren't antibiotics for that."

And the changing temperatures have some people thinking they have a cold when really, it's allergies.

"Most people if they have a runny nose, sore throat, your sneezing, really itchy eyes... But not having a fever, it's probably allergies," says Osborne. "And some people may say well I don't get allergies in the winter but this winter's been a little bit different."

If there's facial pain, sore throat or a fever, then it's probably a cold in which case, doctors recommend just staying home.

"Don't go to work and cough all over everything. If you're really sick you should probably stay home," says Osborne.

She recommends frequently washing your hands with soap and water and not touching your face.