

THE STORY OF A COLD

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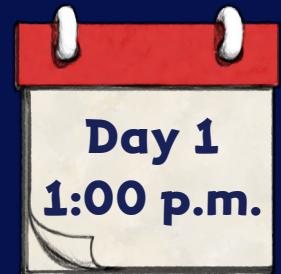
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The sharp north wind bit Ada's nose as she reached for another handful of lichen from the branch above her. Collecting lichen from the forest was something she usually did with her brother Erik, but Mother insisted that he stay inside one more day. Earlier in the month, Erik had gone to visit their cousin Henri for a few days. Well, this visit had not gone as expected! After only two days, Henri had caught a cold due to a virus, and Erik had returned home. A few days later, Erik was stuck in bed with a cold of his own.

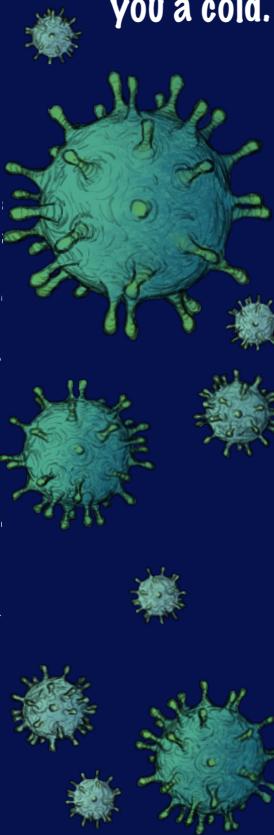




The virus lives in Erik's body.



A cold is caught when a cold-causing virus enters your body. Viruses (also called germs or microbes) are so small that they can be seen only through the most powerful of microscopes. Though they are small, they can wreak havoc on your body! There are over 200 different kinds of viruses that can give you a cold. That's why colds are so common.



A cold virus can enter your body when you come in contact with an infected person's saliva (spit) or mucus (snot), such as when he or she coughs or sneezes near you. The virus enters your body through your eyes, nose, or mouth. Another way to catch a cold is from touching a contaminated surface. For example, if an infected person sneezes viral particles into his or her hand and then touches a doorknob, the virus can survive on that surface for up to 24 hours. Then, you come along and touch that same doorknob and your face and unknowingly transmit the virus into your body.



Ada closed her eyes for what she thought was a few minutes, but when Grandmother came in, her clock told her otherwise. She had fallen asleep for two hours!

With a sniffle and a sneeze, Ada sat up to greet Grandmother.

Grandmother set down the tray she was holding and handed Ada a tissue. “I have brought you some chicken soup, crackers, fruit, and water. A healthy meal with nutrients like vitamin C and zinc helps keep your immune system strong. I also want you to drink lots of water today. Taking in lots of fluids like soup, water, and juice will help your body flush out the virus. Keep that box of tissues handy—you will need it.”

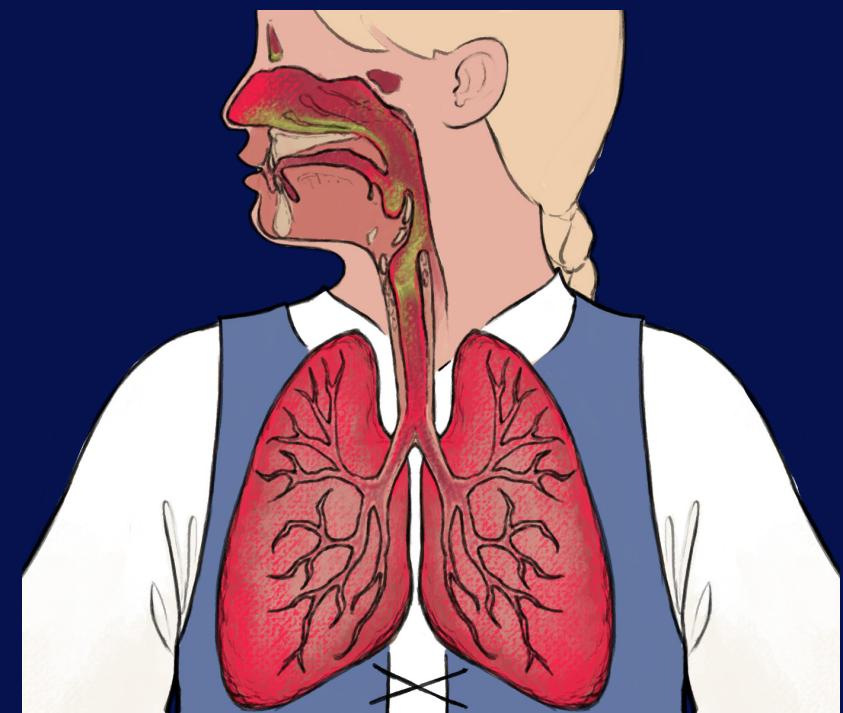
She was right; Ada’s wastepaper basket was soon filled with used tissues. Ada’s congested nose turned into a flowing faucet. She spent the afternoon coughing, sneezing, and blowing her nose. Her body was kicking out the virus.

Ada begins sneezing and sniffling.



The viral particles are still attacking Ada’s respiratory system, and her body is responding through mucus production and other common symptoms.

By the second or third day, the virus is typically at its highest count, so symptoms are usually the worst. The cold symptoms mentioned are actually caused by your body’s response to the virus.



As the days passed, Ada slowly felt better. Her fever broke, she had more energy, and her coughing and sneezing let up. She was finally well enough to spend more time with her family.

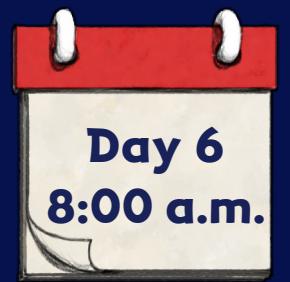
"Good morning, everyone! I am feeling so much better, thanks to Grandmother," Ada announced to everyone as she came into the kitchen.



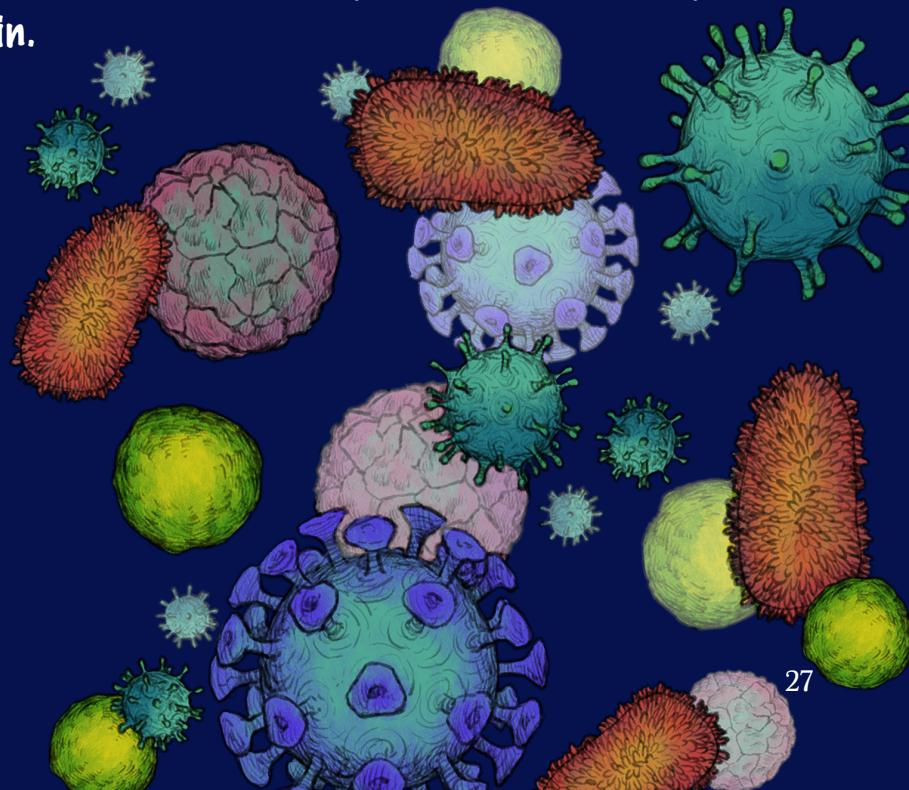


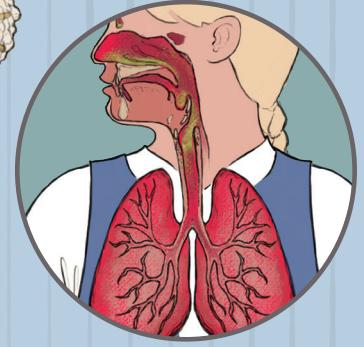
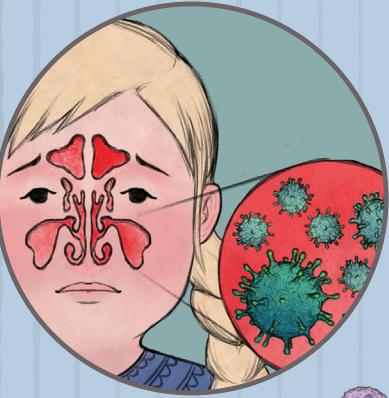
"And to your strong immune system!" Grandmother added. "We all need to help our bodies stay strong with a healthy breakfast. Now go wash your hands with warm, soapy water to wash away the germs so they do not get passed to the rest of us."

**Ada's fever breaks,
and she starts feeling
better.**



Now Ada's immune system has the antibodies for that virus, so if she accidentally passes it on to Grandmother, Grandmother can't pass it back to her because she's already immune to that specific virus. This is also why Ada's brother Erik couldn't catch her cold again, because he had already had that cold. However, remember there are over 200 different strains of the common cold, and currently, she's immune to only one strain.





THE STORY OF A COLD

Have you ever caught a cold and wondered what it is, where it came from, how to treat it, and where it goes after you feel better? Learn the answers to these and many more questions in this book about a Finnish girl named Ada, who learns firsthand the science behind catching and treating a cold when she herself becomes sick.



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