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NEW YORK, NY (Feb. 28, 2018) -- In one of the worst flu seasons in years, during which search rates for cold and flu on [WebMD's Symptom Checker™](#) mirrored the magnitude of the misery felt by millions nationwide, the most recent data suggest that the flu is winding down.

Searches with cold and flu symptoms -- including fever, cough, runny nose, sore throat, and nasal congestion -- increased by more than 47% over last season's peak flu period, which begins in December, and by more than 33% over the course of the entire cold and flu season. The WebMD Symptom Checker™ data show a 14% drop in cold and flu symptom searches, which correlates to the most recent CDC report showing that the percentage of doctor visits for flu symptoms have decreased to 6.4% from 7.5%.

WebMD Symptom Checker™ data, available immediately after midnight every Sunday, have shown a 95% correlation with CDC data, published one week later.

An average of 4 million people a month use WebMD's Symptom Checker™ tool to research symptoms and learn about possible conditions, so they are better informed and more confident about what to do next. While a helpful way for consumers to learn about conditions that may be causing specific symptoms, it is not meant to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment.

"The high level of activity on the WebMD Symptom Checker™ this year over last was a weekly reminder of just how bad this flu season has been," said Michael Smith, M.D., WebMD's Chief Medical Editor. "That the recent data show a decrease in symptom checks for flu suggests that cases may have peaked. That said, we aren't out of the woods yet. The flu remains very active and serious."

WebMD's Symptom Checker™ powers the [WebMD Cold and Flu interactive map](#), which displays real-time analysis of cold and flu data. Users of the map can track cold and flu symptoms across the entire country, by state, or at the county level. Users can also receive push notifications to alert them to a high level of symptoms in their region.

About WebMD

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