

Colds (Age 1-5)

Definition

- The common cold is a viral infection of the nose and throat.
- Main symptoms are a runny nose and sore throat.
- Family members or close friends have same symptoms.
- Medical names are viral rhinitis, upper respiratory infection, URI.

Health Information

Symptoms

- Runny or stuffy nose. The nasal discharge may be clear, cloudy, yellow or green.
- A sore throat can be the first sign.
- Fever can also be present.
- At times, the child may also have a cough and hoarse voice. Sometimes, watery eyes and swollen lymph nodes in the neck also occur.

Cause

- Colds are caused by many respiratory viruses. Healthy children get about 6 colds a year.
- Colds are not serious. With a cold, about 5 and 10% of children develop an ear or sinus infection.

Colds: Symptoms of Secondary Bacterial Infections

Using this guide, you can decide if your child develops a complication. Look for these symptoms:

- Earache or ear discharge.
- Sinus pain not relieved by nasal washes.
- Trouble breathing or rapid breathing.
- Fever lasts over 3 days.
- Fever that goes away for 24 hours and then returns.

Prevention of Spread to Others

- Cover the nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Wash hands often. After coughing or sneezing are important times.
- Stay home from child care or school for at least 24 hours after the fever is gone. (CDC).....

Care Advice

1. Key Points

- It's normal for healthy children to get at least 6 colds a year. With each new cold, your child's body builds up immunity to that virus.
- Most parents know when their child has a cold. Sometimes, they have it too or other children in school have it. Most often, you don't need to call or see your child's doctor.
- There are no drugs to make a cold go away sooner. But, there are good ways to help many of the symptoms. The treatment for each symptom is different.
- Here is some care advice that should help.

2. **For a Runny Nose With Lots of Discharge: Blow or Suction the Nose**
 - The nasal mucus and discharge is washing germs out of the nose and sinuses.
 - Blowing the nose is all that's needed.
 - Teach your child how to blow the nose at age 2 or 3.
 - For younger children, gently suction the nose with a suction bulb.
3. **Nasal Saline To Open a Blocked Nose**
 - Use saline (salt water) nose drops or spray to loosen up the dried mucus. If you don't have saline, you can use a few drops of bottled water or clean tap water. (If under 1 year old, use bottled water or tap water that was boiled.)
 - STEP 1: Put 3 drops in each nostril. Age: if younger than 1 year, use 1 drop at a time.
 - STEP 2: Blow (or suction) each nostril out while closing off the other nostril. Then, do other side.
 - STEP 3: Repeat nose drops and blowing (or suctioning) until the discharge is clear.
 - How often: Do nasal saline when your child can't breathe through the nose. Age: if younger than 1 year, no more than 4 times per day. Before breast or bottle feedings are a good time.
 - Saline nose drops or spray can be bought in any drugstore. No prescription is needed.
 - Reason for nose drops: Suction or blowing alone can't remove dried or sticky mucus. Also, babies can't nurse or drink from a bottle unless the nose is open.
 - Other option. Use a warm shower to loosen mucus. Breathe in moist air, then blow each nostril.
 - For young children, can also use a wet cotton swab to remove sticky mucus.
 - Avoid force: If child fights nasal suction and is able to breathe thru the mouth, stop nasal suction. Instead, just put saline drops in the nose. Reason: saline will loosen mucus and child will sneeze it out.
4. **Fluids**
 - Try to get your child to drink lots of fluids.
 - Goal: Keep your child well hydrated.
 - It will thin out the mucus discharge from the nose. Also, it loosens up any phlegm in the lungs.
5. **Humidifier**
 - If the air in your home is dry, use a humidifier. Reason: Dry air makes nasal mucus thicker.
6. **Over The Counter (OTC) Medicines for Colds: Don't Use**
 - **Cold Medicines.** Don't give any non-prescription cold or cough medicines to young children. They are not approved by the FDA under 6 years. Reasons: They are not safe and can cause serious side effects. Also, they are not helpful. They can't remove dried mucus from the nose. Nasal saline works best.
 - **Allergy Medicines.** They are not helpful, unless your child also has nasal allergies.
 - **No Antibiotics.** Antibiotics are not helpful for viruses or colds. Antibiotics may be used if your child gets an ear or sinus infection.
7. **Fever**
 - For fevers above 102° F (39° C), give acetaminophen (such as Tylenol) or ibuprofen. See a Dose Table. Note: Lower fevers are important for fighting infections.
 - For ALL fevers: Keep your child well hydrated. Give lots of cold fluids.
8. **Treatment for Other Symptoms of Colds**
 - **Pain.** Use acetaminophen (such as Tylenol) or ibuprofen for muscle aches or headaches.
 - **Sore Throat.** For children over 1 year old, can sip warm chicken broth. Some children prefer cold foods such as popsicles or ice cream.
 - **Cough.** For children over 1 year old, for hard coughing, use HONEY 1/2 to 1 teaspoon (2 to 5 mL) as needed. It can soothe the throat and loosen the cough. Caution: Do not use honey until 1 year old.

9. What to Expect

- Fever can last 2-3 days.
- Nasal drainage can last 7-14 days.
- Cough can last 2-3 weeks.

10. Return to School

- Your child can go back to school after the fever is gone.
- Your child should also feel well enough to join in normal activities.

Call Your Doctor If

- Earache occurs
- Fever lasts more than 3 days
- Nasal discharge lasts more than 14 days
- Cough lasts more than 3 weeks
- You think your child needs to be seen
- Your child becomes worse

Pediatric Care Advice

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