



Home Care Advice

MANAGING THE COMMON COLD

Runny Nose With Lots of Discharge---Blow or suction the Nose

- The nasal mucus and discharge is washing viruses and bacteria out of the nose and sinuses.
- Having your child blow the nose is all that is needed.
- For younger children, gently suction the nose with a suction bulb.
- If the skin around the nostrils becomes sore or irritated, apply a small amount of petroleum jelly twice a day.



Nasal Washes to Open a Blocked Nose:

- Use saline nose drops or spray to loosen up the dried mucous.
- **Step 1:** Put 3 drops in each nostril. (Age under 1 year old, use 1 drop.)
- **Step 2:** Blow (or suction) each nostril separately while closing off the other nostril. Then do other side.
- **Step 3:** Do nasal washes when your child can't breathe through the nose. Limit: if under 1 year old, no more than 4 times per day or before every feeding.



Medicines for Colds

- Age limit: Before 4 years, never use any cough or cold medicines
- Decongestants: Decongestants by mouth (such as Sudafed) are not advised. They may help nasal congestion in older children.
- No antibiotics: Antibiotics are not helpful for colds. Antibiotics may be used if your child gets an ear or sinus infection.
- Cough: Use cough drops for children over 6 years old, and honey for younger children over 1 year old.
- Fever: Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or Ibuprofen (brand names Motrin/Advil) may be used for the child who is uncomfortable because of fever during the first few days of a cold. Ibuprofen can be given to children older than six months. Aspirin should **not** be given to any child under age 18 years. There is no benefit of these medications if the child is comfortable. Parents should speak with their child's health care provider about when and how to treat fever.



CALL BACK IF:

- Earache is suspected
- Fever lasts over 3 days
- Any fever occurs if under 12 weeks old
- Nasal discharge lasts over 14 days that is not improving
- Cough lasts over 3 weeks
- Fever returns after going away during the illness
- Child is acting more sick or any other concern.



CONTAGIOUSNESS:

Your child can return to day care or school after the fever is gone for 24 hours and your child feels well enough to participate in normal activities. For practical purposes, the spread of colds cannot be prevented.

