

Cold Care

Most children get 8 to 10 colds before they are 2 years old. Most colds come and go without any big problems.

There is no cure for the common cold. Colds are caused by viruses. Antibiotics don't kill viruses so they will not make your child's cold better.

Colds usually last a week but can even last 10 days. If there is a fever it should come at the start of a cold and then go away. Mucus in your child's nose may turn yellow or green after 3 to 4 days.

Children can get one cold right after another, so it may seem like your child is sick for a long time.

Signs of a cold

- Stuffy nose
- Runny nose
- Sneezing
- Coughing
- Eating more slowly, not feeling

Call the doctor if your child has any of the following signs:

- Fever lasting more than 2 to 3 days
- Cold symptoms that get worse instead of better after a week
- Trouble breathing
- Ear pain

WHAT TO DO FOR A COLD

To help a stuffy nose

Put a cool mist humidifier in your child's room. The extra water in the air from the humidifier helps to clear your child's stuffy nose.

Thin the mucus. Use saline nose drops. Put 2 drops in each nostril 4-5 times per day.

Clear your baby's nose with a suction bulb. Squeeze the bulb first and hold it in. Gently put the rubber tip into one nostril and slowly release the bulb.

To help fever and aches

- For a baby younger than six months, give acetaminophen.
- For a baby older than six months, give either acetaminophen or ibuprofen.

Make sure your child drinks lots of liquids to avoid getting dehydrated.

A WARNING ABOUT COLD AND COUGH MEDICINES

The American Academy of Pediatrics strongly recommends that over-the-counter cough and cold medicines not be given to infants and children younger than 2 years of age because of the risk of life-threatening side effects. Also, several studies show that cold and cough products do not work in children younger than 6 years of age and can have potentially serious side effects.

