

## FEVER

If your child is older than 2 months and has a temperature over 100.4°F, give acetaminophen (e.g., Tylenol, Temptra) as directed on the package to help lower the fever and ease discomfort.

Many children with fevers feel better if they are given a bath with lukewarm water. Hot water or cold water, however, can make them feel worse.

### WHEN TO CALL THE DOCTOR

Colds almost always get better on their own, but sometimes children with colds can develop complications such as ear infections, sinus infections or pneumonia.

#### *Call your child's doctor if:*

- Your child is under 2 months old and has a fever over 100°F;
- Your child has fever over 102°F;
- Your child has noisy, rapid or difficult breathing;
- Your child is blue around the lips, mouth and fingernails;
- Your child is very fussy or very drowsy;
- Your child refuses to drink;
- Your child has neck pain or stiffness;
- Your child complains of earache;
- Your child keeps throwing up;
- The fever lasts longer than two days or comes back after going away;
- The cold lasts longer than 10-14 days; or
- Your child has any other symptoms that concern you.

### South Carolina Careful Antibiotic Use (C.A.Use) Taskforce Members

- Association of Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC)
- Blue Cross/Blue Shield of SC
- Children's Hospital of the Greenville Hospital System
- Companion Healthcare
- National Association of Pediatric Nurse Associates and Practitioners—S.C. Chapter
- Parish Nurses
- SC Department of Health and Environmental Control
- SC Nurses Association
- SC Parent Teacher Association
- SC Pharmacy Association
- SC Primary Care Association
- SC Public Health Association
- USC College of Pharmacy

#### Support provided by:

- Bayer Corporation
- Glaxo Wellcome
- Roche Pharmaceuticals
- SmithKline Beecham



Because *sometimes*  
the **best** medicine  
is **NO** medicine.

## Helping Your Child's Cold Symptoms



**Y**our child has been diagnosed with a cold. Colds are caused by viruses (germs) that infect the nose, throat and sinuses. Antibiotics do not work on cold viruses, and the best treatment is watchful waiting. Colds often last for 7-10 days and get better on their own. Although there is little you can do to make a cold get better faster, there are several ways you can help your child feel more comfortable.

## What causes colds and runny noses?

Colds are caused by viruses (germs) that infect the nose, throat and sinuses. Most healthy children get at least six colds a year.

## What are the symptoms?

The main symptom of a cold is a runny nose. When cold viruses first infect the nose and sinuses, the nose makes clear mucus which helps to wash the germs away. After two to three days, the nasal mucus becomes thicker and turns to white, yellow or green. The colored mucus results from the immune cells the body makes to help fight the virus and is a normal part of any cold.

There also may be sneezing, sore throat, dry cough and muscle aches. Fever is common, but usually lasts only 1-2 days.

## How long does a cold last?

Colds often last for 7-10 days.

## Are antibiotics helpful for a cold?

No. Antibiotics do not work on cold viruses. *There is still no cure for the common cold.* The best treatment is watchful waiting.

## What can I do to help my child feel better?

**If your child has a:**

### **RUNNY/STUFFY NOSE**

**For young infants (less than 6 months)**

- Suction mucus from the noses of infants and young children by using a bulb syringe and salt-water (“saline”) nose drops. These are available in the infant section of your pharmacy.
- Do not use over-the-counter cold medicines in young children unless told to do so by your baby’s doctor. Avoid medicated nose drops, which can sometimes make a stuffy nose even worse.
- Your baby should keep drinking her usual formula or breast milk.

**For older children:**

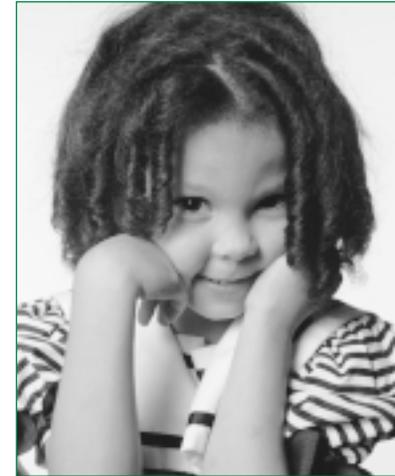
- Have older children blow their noses to help clear them.
- Offer plenty of fluids, which help keep the mucus thin. Children with colds often have poor appetites, but they should be able to drink without problems.
- It’s fine for your child to eat his regular diet if he feels up to it.

**For all ages:**

- A cool mist vaporizer may also help relieve symptoms in both infants and children.
- Apply petroleum jelly (e.g., Vaseline) to irritated lips and nostrils.
- Encourage extra rest periods.

### **COUGH**

- Offer plenty of fluids.
- Coughing is the body’s best way of keeping the lungs clear. Do not give your child over-the-counter cough medicines without first talking to your child’s doctor.
- Some coughs are helped by a cool mist vaporizer or by sitting in a steamy bathroom.



### **SORE THROAT**

- Offer plenty of fluids. Some sore throats in older children are soothed by popcicles or ice cream.
- Children over 5 years old may suck hard candy or lozenges for relief.
- Children 8 years old and older may gargle with salt water (1/2 tsp. of salt in 8 oz. of water).