

## COUGH AND COLD REMEDIES

Cough and cold medications can cause serious side effects in young children. In January 2008, the FDA recommended they never be used under 2 years of age. In October 2008, they supported changing the cutoff to 6 years of age. Fortunately, you can easily treat coughs and colds without these OTC medicines. Treat your child's symptoms with the following helpful home remedies.

1. **RUNNY NOSE:** Just suction it or blow it. And remember, when your child's nose runs like a faucet, it's getting rid of viruses.
2. **BLOCKED NOSES:** Use nasal washes.
  - Use saline nose drops or spray to loosen up the dried mucus, followed by blowing or suctioning the nose.
  - Instill 2-3 drops in each nostril. Do one side at a time. Then suction or blow. Repeat nasal washes until the return is clear.
  - Do nasal washes whenever your child can't breathe through the nose. For infants on a bottle or breast, use nose drops before feedings.
  - Saline nose drops and sprays are available in all pharmacies. To make your own, add ½ teaspoon of table salt to 1 cup warm tap water.
  - Sticky, stubborn mucus: remove with a wet cotton swab.
3. **COUGHING:** Use homemade cough medicines
  - Under 1 year of age, only use warm clear fluids (e.g. Pedialyte). Dosage: 1-3 teaspoons (5 – 15ml) four times per day when coughing. Avoid honey because it can cause infantile botulism. Under 3 months, see your child's doctor.
  - Over 1 year of age, use HONEY ½ to 1 teaspoon (2-5ml) as needed. It thins the secretions and loosens the cough. (If not available, can use corn syrup). Recent Research (12/2007) has shown that honey is better than drugstore cough syrups at reducing the frequency and the severity of nighttime coughing.
  - Over 6 years of age, use COUGH DROPS to coat the irritated throat.
  - Coughing spasms: Expose to warm mist from a shower.
4. **FLUIDS:** Help your child drink plenty of fluids. Staying well hydrated thins the body's secretions, making it easier to cough and blow the nose.
5. **HUMIDITY:** If the air in your home is dry, use a humidifier. Moist air keeps the nasal mucus from drying up and lubricates the airway. Remember to keep your humidifier clean and change filter frequently.
6. **AVOID TOBACCO SMOKE:** Active or passive smoking makes coughs and nasal congestion worse.

**In summary, home remedies work better than medicines for treating coughs and common colds. If you have any questions or concerns please call the office (703-494-1144).**