

BEVERLY HILLS PEDIATRICS

COUGH & COLD

Your child will probably have more colds, or upper respiratory infections than any other illness. Most children have at least 8-10 colds in the first two years of life. Colds are caused by viruses and can be spread directly by coughing and sneezing or indirectly by touching your nose or coughing into your hand and then touching a healthy person. Viruses and bacteria are two different causes of infection. Antibiotics kill bacteria, NOT viruses. The best treatment is supportive care. Colds may last up to 3 weeks and coughs may last even longer.

Young infants are susceptible to colds as well. They may become fussy during breast or bottle-feeding because they are nasal breathers and it is difficult to breathe and eat with a stuffy nose. In this case, let your child take several breaks during feeding to catch their breath when they are fussy. Furthermore, placing a cool mist vaporizer in the room may help loosen nasal secretions and help improve a restless night's sleep. Mucous can be many different colors and darker/green mucous does not necessarily indicate the need for antibiotics. Antibiotics do not kill viruses.

Symptoms of a cold

- coughing
- sneezing
- runny nose
- nasal congestion
- fever

Treatment

- vaporizer or humidifier
- steam shower
- good hydration
- nasal saline drops and bulb suction out the nose

Cough and cold preparations are no longer recommended for children under 4 years of age. Children over the age of 4 can try them at their parents discretion, but they have not proven to be effective.

Call our office if:

- fever persists greater than 72 hours
- fever does not respond to the appropriate dose of Tylenol, Motrin or Advil
- labored breathing