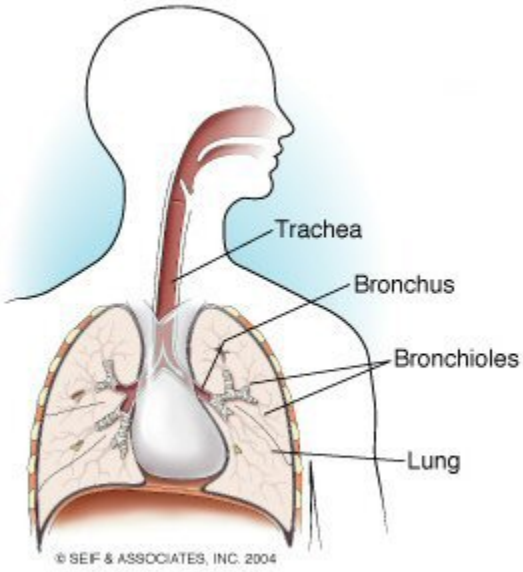
Upper Respiratory Infection (URI), Child

An upper respiratory tract infection or cold is a viral infection of the air passages leading to the lungs. A cold can be spread to others, especially during the first 3 or 4 days. It can not be cured by *antibiotics* (medications that kill germs) or other medicines. A cold usually clears up in a few days. However, some children may be sick for several days or have a cough lasting several weeks.



HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Use saline nose drops frequently to keep the nose open from secretions. It works better than suctioning with the bulb syringe, which can cause minor bruising inside the child's nose. Occasionally you may have to use bulb suctioning, but it is strongly believed that saline rinsing of the nostrils is more effective in keeping the nose open. This is especially important for the infant who needs an open nose to be able to suck with a closed mouth.
- Only give your child over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by their caregiver. **Do not give aspirin to children under 18 years of age** because of aspirin's association with Reye's Syndrome.
- Use a cool mist humidifier if available to increase air moisture. This will make it easier for your child to breathe. **Do not use hot steam.**
- Give your child plenty of clear liquids. If your child is an infant, continue to give normal formula or breast milk feedings.
- Have your child rest as much as possible.
- Keep your child home from day care or school until the fever is gone.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Your child has an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C).
- Your baby is older than 3 months with a rectal temperature of 100.5º F (38.1° C) or higher for more than 1 day.
- Mucus comes from your child's nose turns yellow or green.
- The eyes are red and matted with a yellow discharge.
- Your child's skin under the nose becomes crusted or scabbed over.
- Your child complains of an earache or sore throat, develops a rash, or is repeatedly pulling on his or her ear.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Your child has signs of water loss such as:
  - Unusually sleepiness
  - Dry mouth
  - Very thirsty
  - Little or no urination
  - Wrinkled skin
  - Dizziness
  - No tears
  - A sunken soft spot on the top of the head
- Your child has trouble breathing or the skin or nails turn bluish.
- Your child's skin or nails look gray or blue.
- Your child looks and acts sicker.
- Your child has chest pain.
- Your child has an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C), not controlled by medicine.
- Your baby is older than 3 months with a rectal temperature of 102º F (38.9º C) or higher.
- **Your baby is 3 months old or younger with a rectal temperature of 100.4º F (38º C) or higher.**

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