Common Cold, Child

A cold is an infection of the air passages to the lungs (*upper respiratory system*). This means it affects the nose, throat, and ears. Colds can spread from person-to-person (*contagious*), especially during the first 3 to 4 days. Cold germs are spread by coughs, sneezes, and hand-to-hand contact. A cold usually clears up in a few days, but some people may be sick for a week or two.

HOME CARE

- Use saline nose drops on your child often. This will keep your child's nose open and clear. A bulb syringe may be used for an infant who needs an open nose to be able to suck with a closed mouth.
- Only give medicine to your child as directed by your doctor.
- Have your child blow their nose gently. Blowing too hard may cause a nose bleed.
- Run a cool-mist humidifier. This is a quiet machine that sprays a fine cool mist in the air. Humidifiers make a room moist, which can loosen mucus.
- Have your child rest and get plenty of sleep.
- Have your child wash his or her hands often.
- Have your child cover his or her mouth when they sneeze or cough.
- Have your child drink enough water and fluids to keep their pee (*urine*) clear or pale yellow.

GET HELP IF:

- Your child has a temperature by mouth 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.
- Your child has a sore throat that gets worse or has white or yellow spots in their throat.
- Your child has a cough that gets worse or it lasts more than 10 days.
- Your child develops a rash.
- Your child develops large or tender bumps on their neck.
- Your child develops an earache or headache.
- Your child has thick, greenish or yellowish discharge from their nose.
- Your child coughs up thick yellow, green, gray, or bloody mucus.

GET HELP RIGHT AWAY IF:

- Your child has a temperature by mouth 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.**
- Your child has trouble breathing, chest pain, or is very sleepy.
- Your child's skin or nails look gray or blue.
- You think things may be getting worse.

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