

## Instructions for Cold and Cough

Most colds are caused by viruses. Antibiotics do not help a cold. Colds can start with a scratchy throat or a runny nose. At first the mucous is clear, but may get thicker and greenish before it goes away. A cold usually lasts 2-7 days.

If your child has a cough with the cold, the cough may start at the beginning of the cold or even a few days later. The cough may last a few weeks even after your child seems better from the cold.

Children may have a fever with a cold. The fever should not last more than a few days. **DO NOT use rubbing alcohol** on your child. It is dangerous and may poison a child. You can give your child a lukewarm bath after giving Tylenol.

**What you can do** to help your child to make your child more comfortable while the cold goes away by itself:

- o If your child's nose is stuffy, you may mix  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon of salt in 4 ounces of warm water and place 1-2 drops in each nostril (one at a time), followed by very gentle suction with a nasal suction bulb to remove mucus.
- o Cool mist humidifier in the child's room (remember to clean it each day!)
- o Warm drinks
- o For fever that is making your child uncomfortable, you may give Tylenol every 4 hours.
- o Fever in newborns (under 2 months) can be very serious. Please call.
- o Over the counter cold medicines, when given to children under 6 years old, have not been shown to be safe or effective.

**Call the doctor if**

- \* your child's cough lasts more than 2 weeks
- \* your child's fever lasts more than 5 days, or isn't starting to come down on the 4<sup>th</sup> day
- \* your child isn't drinking a normal amount, or is not urinating a normal amount
- \* your child is breathing fast, or looks like it's hard work to breathe

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