

Simple remedies often best for common colds in young children



It's late and your child is awake with a cough. What's a tired parent to do?

Over-the-counter cold medications for children under age 2 were pulled from store shelves in 2008. Little proof existed that these remedies did anything to ease the symptoms of children under age 6. In fact, studies have indicated that some simple remedies can be helpful, and many can be found in your bathroom or kitchen cabinet. Following are tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) to help calm your young child's cough and cold symptoms so the whole house can sleep soundly.

Sweet dreams

Buckwheat honey was found to ease nighttime coughing and sleeplessness in children ages 2 and older, according to a 2008 study. Honey can be fed safely to children over age 1, according to the AAP Nutrition Handbook. The AAP does not recommend giving honey to infants under 12 months of age because it could contain a bacterium that causes infant botulism. The AAP advises starting with $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 teaspoon as needed.

Saline solution

Saline solution offers a way to keep the tiniest noses clear. Babies can benefit from nasal washes prior to nursing or bottle feeding. Make saline solution by combining $\frac{1}{2}$

teaspoon of table salt per 1 cup of warm tap water. Put two to three drops in the nostril and use a bulb syringe to suction it out. Older children also can gargle saline solution to ease sore throats. You can also buy similar products over the counter.

Vapor rubs

For children older than age 2, topical vapor rubs can help ease chest and nose congestion. A 2010 study found that vapor rub containing camphor, menthol and eucalyptus oils relieves symptoms and aids sleep in children with colds. Rubs never should be given by mouth or rubbed under the nose. Follow instructions on the label and rub on the chest.

If all else fails

Consult your pediatrician if your child's symptoms last longer than a week, he or she has a mild fever for more than two to three days (call the pediatrician right away if your infant under 2 months has a fever), your child has severe ear pain that does not go away or has a sore throat accompanied by fever and swollen neck.

My favorite regimen is to give the child a warm shower followed by a warm savory soup and to finish it off with honey (without mixing it with anything). After this the kids can rinse their mouth or brush their teeth but not eat or drink anything after the honey for ~30min if possible. This is most useful at bedtime so that the nasal passages are clear and your child can have a restful night.

Don't forget to get the flu shot!!



Appointment

For: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

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