



## Upper Respiratory Infections: Children 4-Years-Old or Older

### **Congestion- 1<sup>st</sup>, Clear your nose:**

- Blow it a lot
- Use saline mist or drops, squirt 1-2 times in each side 3-4 times a day at least.
- If using “normal” saline, do it liberally. It can be made at home with 1 cup of filtered water, ¼ tsp of non-iodized sea salt and ¼ tsp of baking soda. Any mist bottle will work, including old medicine bottles if cleaned out. If you want improved effect consider a sinus wash or netty pot.
- Never underestimate the power of a steamy shower!
- Run a vaporizer or humidifier in the bedroom.

If still stuffy after clearing the boogers, consider trying “hypertonic” saline mist or drops. It is made with the above recipe, except use ¾ tsp of salt. The final choice is Afrin Nasal Spray. This can be used at 1-2 squirts, each side, every 10-12 hrs for up to 3 days. It must be stopped for >24 hrs after this. If necessary, another 3 day cycle of Afrin can be used, but I recommend >5 days off after a second round. This can cause rebound congestion that is “worse than anything” if overused.

### **Cough- 1<sup>st</sup>, clear your congestion.**

According to the State of the Art Science of 2013, natural remedies work the best for cough.

- Honey: use 1-3 tsp every 2-4 hrs. It can be eaten from a spoon, put on bread or in tea.
- Camphor/Menthol on the chest. This is in Vick’s Vaporub and J.R. Watkins products.
- Good hydration and rest. Push water to see urine production every 2-3 hours.

If all of those are not helping, the available “antitussive” medicines are “DM” (dextromethorphan is in lots of products) and “expectorants” (guifenesin). I do not recommend using these more than 5-7 days. Side effects are often worse than the help.

I do not recommend decongestants, multisymptom medicines or anything but water in a humidifier/vaporizer.

Use gum and lozenges for sore throat and ibuprofen for comfort and pain.

If not resolving in 10 days, temperature > 101°F more than 3 days or new concerns, call or return to the office.