



Upper Respiratory Infections: Children 4-Years-Old or Younger

Congestion- 1st, 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 in older children.
- Never underestimate the power of a steamy shower!
- Run a vaporizer or humidifier in the bedroom.

Nasal suction is useful, but torturous. Do it fast, but GOOD! Rinse out the nose first as above, let it get gooey and wet. Then, hold the head still, squeeze the aspirator, hold one side and suck out the other fast and twice. Go immediately to the other side, twice. Let them up! It is helpful to have a tissue close to clear your aspirator into and to wipe the nose with.

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.

Cough- 1st, 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.
Do not give to children <1 year old.
- Camphor/Menthol on the chest. This is in Vick’s Vaporub and J.R. Watkins products.
Keep this in a safe place, camphor is toxic if eaten. It burns the eyes too, so put a shirt over the rub after placing.
- Good hydration and rest. Push water to see urine production every 2-3 hours.

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

Use ibuprofen for comfort and pain if over 6 months and acetaminophen if under. It is ok to use on schedule for up to 3 days, then see if the fever or pain is continuing and treat as needed.

If not resolving in >14 days, temperature > 101°F more than 5 days or new concerns, call or return to the office.