



Colds & Flu in Children

What is the common cold and the flu?

Both the common cold and the flu are infections of the respiratory tract, which includes the throat, nose, airways and lungs.

How do I know if my child has a cold or the flu?

Although the common cold and the flu share many similar symptoms, they are two different conditions.

The symptoms of a cold include:

- Fever up to 102 degrees
- Runny or stuffy nose (often with green or yellow-colored discharge)
- Sore throat
- Cough
- Sneezing
- Fatigue and muscle aches
- Headache

The symptoms of the flu include:

- Fever over 102 degrees
- Stuffy nose
- Diarrhea
- Nausea and vomiting
- Chills and sweats
- Fatigue and muscle aches
- Cough
- Headache
- Loss of appetite

What medicines can I give my child?

There is no cure for the cold or the flu, and antibiotics do not work against viruses.

Pain relievers such as acetaminophen (Children's Tylenol) or Ibuprofen (Children's Motrin) can help ease the pain of headaches, muscle aches and sore throats as well as treat fevers. Be sure you are giving your child the correct dose according to his or her age and weight.

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Nasal sprays and decongestants are not recommended for young children, as they may cause side effects. Cough and cold medicines are also not recommended for children, especially those under 2 years of age. There is also little evidence that cough and cold medicines and nasal decongestants are effective in treating children.

To treat a cold or the flu, make sure that your child rests and drinks plenty of fluids. You can use a humidifier (cool mist recommended) to help moisten the air in your child's bedroom. This will help with nasal congestion. You can also use a plain nasal saline spray to thin nasal mucus, and a bulb syringe to suction mucus out of your baby or child's nose.

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Natural Treatments include and are optional:

➤ **Vitamin D₃**

<u>Spring/Summer</u>	<u>Fall/Winter</u>	<u>Sick</u>	
400 I.U.	800 I.U.	1600 I.U.	Kids < 7 years old
2000 I.U.	4000 I.U.	8000 I.U.	Adults/Kids ≥ 8 years old
Maximum safe dose		Kids is 10,000 I.U. - Adults 50,000 I.U.	

- **Oscillococcinum** (Boiron) - At Healthy Kids Pediatrics, we recommend Oscillococcinum, a homeopathic remedy and preventative for the flu, available at most pharmacies for all types of the flu. It can be safely taken by children and adults alike. Oscillococcinum is most effective if started within 48 hours of developing fever. This helps relieve the common symptoms of flu as well as shorten the duration of symptoms. This is recommended for children 2 and up to be taken 3 times daily for 5 days. This may also be used to treat the remaining members of the family after exposure to lessen their chances of getting the flu once daily for 5 days.
- **Influenzinum** (Boiron) - Many families take the homeopathic flu product called Influenzinum. It has been used in Europe for years during the flu season to assist in prevention. Every year, the World Health Organization predicts which flu viruses are most likely to infect and cause flu symptoms. Based on this information, the homeopathic solution is reformulated year to year to help prepare the body during the flu season. It has no side effects, can be purchased over-the-counter, and is for the entire family. Adults take 10 pellets & children take 4 pellets a week for four weeks and then once a month during the flu season. Refer to package instructions for different dosing recommendations to treat flu-like symptoms.
- **Influenza - Multi Strain Flu Medicine** (King Bio) A homeopathic spray formulation for broad spectrum flu symptoms. According to Bio-King it can be used during high-risk months to minimize chances of contracting the flu. It is also useful for lasting fatigue and residual symptoms which occur in some individuals after a bout with the flu. Dosing is 3 sprays for adults, 2 sprays for children 2-12 years old and 1 spray for infants 0-2 years old. It is sprayed under the tongue 2-6 times per day until symptoms improve. It can also be used preventatively once a day to once weekly, depending on your exposure risk. See package details.
- **Immune boosters** - Elderberry (research has shown that it stops the viral replication of the flu), Briar Rose (Boiron), Virex (Nutri-West), Echinacea, Vitamin C, etc. Immune boosters work with your immune system to help it fight off the infection. They can be taken 2-3 times per day during an acute illness for 1-2 weeks. For specific dosing recommendations see labeling or product insert as well as other Healthy Kids Pediatrics handouts.
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Is there a way to prevent catching a cold or the flu?

The best way to prevent colds is to make sure you and your family frequently washes your hands with soap and water. This will kill the germs that can lead to the cold and the flu. Encourage your child to cough and sneeze into the inside of his or her elbow (rather than into his or her hand). Clean common surfaces such as table and counter tops, your child’s toys, door handles and bathroom facilities with anti-bacterial disinfectant. This can help stop the spread of germs.

To prevent the flu, a flu vaccine is available every fall. The flu shot is safe for all children age 6 months and older. We offer only non-preservative pediatric version at our office.



Your child should be seen by a healthcare provider if he/she is experiencing any difficulty breathing, persistent or recurring fever, extreme lethargy, persistent vomiting, diarrhea, dehydration, or symptoms seem to be worsening or you have major concerns about your child health.

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