



Symptom Help for Colds and Viral Infections

During cold and flu season, most colds, sore throats and upper respiratory infections are caused by viruses. Antibiotics are not helpful in treating these conditions. The virus just needs to run its course.

Specific symptoms	Home remedies	Over-the-counter
Stuffy nose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a room humidifier • Salt water, nose drops or spray 	Decongestant: opens up the nasal passages
Runny nose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For sore nose, use petroleum 	Antihistamine: dries up mucus
Dry cough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a room humidifier • Gargle with warm salt water 	Cough suppressant: helps stop cough
Moist cough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink more fluids 	Expectorant: thins mucus, makes it easier to cough up
Sore throat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gargle with warm salt water • Drink tea 	Throat lozenges: soothes throat *Do not give to children under 10 years old
Fever / muscle aches or ear ache	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cool compress on the forehead for fever • Warm compress on sore muscles or ear 	Analgesic: pain reliever *Do not give Aspirin to children under 18 years old
Itchy, watery eyes/sneezing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid things you are allergic to or that cause irritation 	Antihistamine: dries watery eyes and may relieve itchy eyes