



Over-the-counter prescription for upper respiratory infection (URI) or “common cold”

The doctor has diagnosed you or your child with upper respiratory infection. The symptoms include:

- Stuffy, runny nose
- Congestion
- Sneezing
- Cough – from the increased mucus dripping down the throat
- Scratchy, tickly throat or even a sore throat
- Watery eyes
- Mild hacking cough
- Achy muscles and bones
- Headaches
- Low grade fever
- Chills
- Watery discharge from the nose that thickens and turns yellow or green
- Mild fatigue

URI means you have a virus. Antibiotics will not help you.

How do you feel better?

- Saline nose drops/spray.
- Avoid secondhand smoke.
- Drink fluids, but avoid caffeine. Water is nature’s best way to clear mucus.
- Use a bulb syringe to help remove the mucus.
- Place a cool mist humidifier in the room.

Medication recommendations:

Medications can help symptoms and get you back on your feet. The doctor suggests to take the following:

- Analgesics, such as acetaminophen** for helping to decrease the discomfort of colds
- Cough or cold medications** if older than 4 years old for relief from a cold: _____

- Antihistamine** for helping some viral symptoms, but could make your child sleepy
- Oral decongestants or pseudoephedrine** including Sudafed® and others – watch for the “-D” at the end which suggests it contains a decongestant
- Ibuprofen** can be more effective for pain, reducing inflammation, decreasing the discomfort, or lowering your fever if it’s greater than 101°F at the dosage of: _____

- Guaifenesin** would which help thin the mucus and can help thin thick discolored drainage. Includes Robitussin®, Mucofen®, Mucinex®, Humibid LA® or Humibid-e®.
- Dextromethorphan** as a cough suppressant

Watch for:

- Ear infections
- Sinus infections
- Pneumonia
- Throat infections

When to go back to the doctor:

- Fever greater than 100.4°F
- Symptoms lasting more than 10 days
- Symptoms not relieved by over the counter medications

References:

1. Johns Hopkins Medicine, hopkinsmedicine.org/healthlibrary/conditions/pediatrics/upper_respiratory_infection_uri_or_common_cold, 9/25/17.
2. Cleveland Clinic, my.clevelandclinic.org/-/scassets/files/org/head-neck/sinus-resources/4-common-cold.ashx?la=en, 9/25/17