



Baby 'N Me

The Common Cold

Most children will develop between two and eight colds each year. Some children seem to have “bad” years (continuous colds) and “good” years (one to two colds).

Symptoms of a Cold

The first sign is usually a clear, watery discharge from the nose. This is followed by sneezing, watery eyes, and a scratchy throat. Night may bring a dry, tickling cough. There may be an associated fever during the first three days. By the fourth and fifth days:

- the base of the nose may be red and raw.
- the discharge may be yellow and thick.
- the cough may be present all day and night.
- the nose may be stuffy.
- the appetite may be poor.
- the child may be tired.

Most symptoms last 7-14 days.

What You Can Do

There are no drugs or medicines to cure a cold, but there are several ways of making the child more comfortable during the cold:

1. Offer extra liquids (juice, pop, water, weak tea) and do not worry if the child does not seem to want to eat.
2. Allow extra time for naps or rest periods.
3. At night, use a vaporizer near the child's bed. Cold vapor is best, but hot vapor will also help. Use caution in setting up a hot vaporizer. Do not set it in the bed or on the floor where you will trip on it or an older child will fall on it and be burned during a trip to check on the ill child.
4. For infants who cannot blow their noses, a nose syringe can be purchased at the drug store and used to remove some of the discharge at the edge of the nose. Compress the bulb, gently insert it into the nostril, and slowly release.
5. For raw noses, use a dab of petroleum jelly or mentholated ointment at the base of the nose. Spread it thinly so it will not be inhaled.
6. For a slight fever, let the child play in a lukewarm bath for twenty minutes. Encourage extra fluids and give Tempa or Tylenol as directed.
7. To relieve nasal congestion, normal saline nose drops can be used. (A solution of 1/4 tsp. salt and 1 cup of water (8 oz.) should be mixed) Instill two drops of this solution in each nostril, followed by gently suctioning with nasal syringe or gentle nose blowing. This may be done four to five times daily.