

## **You child has been diagnosis with a virus.**

Antibiotics cannot treat viruses and using an antibiotic when it is not truly useful may be harmful to the patient and the community. Complications for the patient may include allergic reactions and diarrhea. Where as problems for the community includes whole escalating medical costs and resistance to the antibiotics as you see in the Staph infections that have been in the news lately.

In addition, almost all cold and cough preparations for children and infants have been taken off the market. This decision was based on many facts including the lack of research in dosing these medications, as well scientific evidence showing their effectiveness.

Although there is no cure for the common viral infections, we can provide you with ways to give your child symptomatic relief.

**Use a medicine dispenser** to give all of your child's medication - including Tylenol and ibuprofen.

- Accurate dosing is important and household teaspoons are not all the same. Parents run out of medication having given just a bit too much because they used tableware to dose medication. You do not want to pay an additional co-pay for 3 more doses! Nor do you want to give your child too much medication. Sometimes you may have to give unusual doses, like 4 cc., so a medicine dispenser with cc or ml must be used.
- As per the math - cc's and ml's are the same. A teaspoon is roughly 5 cc, a tablespoon 15cc, and an oz = 30 cc.

### **To relieve stuffy nose**

- Thin the mucus using saline nose drops - these come by many names just make sure they are pure saline without medications. Saline with glycerin is fine to use also.
- You may use a **nasal aspirator** to clear secretions out of the nose. A blunt short tipped aspirator is the easiest and safest to use. Use an aspirator if the baby seems to be having trouble breathing comfortably, or is not feeding as well because the nose is stuffed up. Do not use merely

because the baby sounds funny. If it is not bothering the baby leave the baby alone! First, put a few drops of saline drops in each nostril. This will loosen the secretions. Then squeeze the bulb of the aspirator as hard as you can - getting as much air out of it. Then place the tip up one nostril while pushing on the side of the other nostril to occlude it completely. Get a good seal. This works only if the aspirator has a good seal - it should almost stick in the nose by vacuum force alone. Then, release the bulb and then you can literally vacuum the nose. Repeat as needed. You may see some blood tinged secretions - do not worry, you did nothing wrong.

- Use a cool-mist humidifier in your child's room. This helps to moisten the air and clear your child's nasal passages. Be sure to clean the humidifier daily by using a bleach solution to kill all molds.
- Taking the child into a warm shower or bath can also loosen nasal secretions and soothe mucous membranes in the nose and mouth.
- For children older than 9 months of age feed you child warm chicken broth, especially homemade. It is known to boost the immune stem as well as thin thick mucous. In addition it helps prevent dehydration and that also helps thins secretions.
- Warm tea thins secretions. The best tea for children is chamomile, and peppermint. After a year of age, honey may be used in the tea.

### **To soothe a sore or irritated throat**

- Tylenol and ibuprofen helps with the pain
- For older children - sucking on lollipops soothes the throat.
- For children over a year of age honey can be used.
- For children who can gargle - you can make a solution of 50% cider vinegar and 50% honey. Take 2 teaspoons and gargle with the solutions - then swallow it. By swallowing it you can get relief further down into the throat.

## To relieve fever

- Give your child acetaminophen or ibuprofen. Ask your pediatrician for the right dosage for your child's age and size. **These doses are available on line in your child's portal account.** Do not use the ibuprofen infant drops because they are too hard to dose accurately. Don't give aspirin to your child because it has been associated with Reye syndrome, a disease that affects the liver and the brain. Do not use rubbing alcohol ever! You may bathe in warm water to reduce fever. Never bathe in cool or cold water because that will cause a chill that will raise the temperature. Likewise, you may sponge with warm water. Evaporation is what reduces the fever because it draws heat away from the body.

## To prevent dehydration

- Make sure your child drinks a lot of fluids. He may want clear liquids rather than milk or formula. He may eat more slowly or not feel like eating because he is having hard time breathing.

## Prevention

- Make sure everyone washes his or her hands. Regular hand washing helps prevent the spread of germs. Review proper technique.
- Do not expose your child unnecessarily to anyone who has a cold, fever, or runny nose.
- Avoid sharing eating utensils, drinking cups, toothbrushes, washcloths, or towels with anyone who has a cold, fever, or runny nose.
- Wash dishes and utensils in hot, soapy water.
- Don't smoke around your child.

## In general - when to come into the office:

- A normal upper respiratory infection lasts 10 days from start to finish. The beginning secretions are clear and then about day 3-5 they may turn yellow - green. This is normal. However, the secretions should return to clear by day 9-10. If they do not clear up completely within 10 days please make an appointment to be seen.
- If your child does not have a fever at the beginning of the virus but then develops a fever.
- If your child has a fever higher than 101.5, with a cough, he needs to be seen to determine if this is a virus or a more serious infections such as pneumonia.
- Sore throat without a runny nose or congestion.
- All infants under 4 months of age.
- If your child's virus doesn't seem to go away, or seems to get worse.
- If you do not like how your child is breathing or he appears listless.
- If you are worried - trust your instincts.