

Do **cold** and **cough** medicines work?

Over-the-counter medications

Antihistamines, cough suppressants and decongestants may mask some cold and cough symptoms, but there has never been good evidence that they work.

Natural cold medications have become popular in the treatment of colds in children, but the safety and effectiveness of such medications have not been carefully studied.

Topical remedies that are rubbed into a child's chest may provide a soothing smell, but there is no evidence that this helps with cough or congestion. Studies have shown over-dosage of this type of medication may lead to seizures in children under the age of 2.



With or without treatment, most cold and cough symptoms will last

7-10 days



Rest is the best remedy

Parents often feel helpless when their child is sick and turn to medications and antibiotics for a cure all. We tend to overmedicate our kids in hopes that it will make them feel better faster, but nothing makes the cold go away faster than rest and letting the cold cure itself.

Non-medication suggestions to alleviate symptoms

- Drink a lot of fluids
- Place cool-mist humidifier in room to increase air moisture
- Use bulb syringe to suck out any excess mucous (for children under 2 years)
- Sleep with head slightly elevated to improve nasal drainage
- Use saline drops in the nose to loosen mucous
- Use steam from a hot shower to help congestion
- Drink honey with tea (for children older than 1 year)



A word on antibiotics overuse

Antibiotics, which fight bacteria, are not effective for treating colds since they are caused by viruses. In fact, overuse of antibiotics can lead to antibiotic resistance and reduced effectiveness when they are needed to fight a bacterial infection.