



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Aneurin Bevan
University Health Board

Viral illness Advice

This leaflet is intended for the carers of children to help with your child's recovery and explain how to manage a child with viral illness.

What are the symptoms of viral illness?

- Blocked or runny nose
- Sore throat
- Headaches
- Muscle aches
- Coughs
- Sneezing
- Raised temperature
- Pressure in ears and face
- Loss of taste and smell
- It is common for children to lose their appetite when they have a cold for a few days.

How can you treat it yourself?

- Rest and sleep
- Keep warm
- Drink plenty of water (fruit juice or squash mixed with water is OK) to avoid dehydration
- Ease aches or lower a temperature with painkillers like paracetamol or ibuprofen.

Please remember that if your child seems distressed, and you are considering giving them children's paracetamol or ibuprofen, these should not be given together. But if you give your child one medicine and it does not seem to be helping, it is OK to try the other one before the next dose is due.

A pharmacist can provide advice with regards to:

Speak to your pharmacist with regards to other additional treatments / remedies.

Are Antibiotics needed?

Doctors do not recommend antibiotics for colds because they will not relieve your child's symptoms or speed their recovery. Antibiotics are only effective against bacterial infections but do not help viruses.

What about the Flu vaccine?

The flu vaccine helps prevent flu but not colds.

See your doctor or attend ED if your child's:

- Symptoms do not improve within 5-7 days
- Symptoms get suddenly worse
- Temperature is very high, or your child feels hot and shivery
- You are concerned about your child's symptoms
- Finding it hard to breathe or develop chest pain
- There is a decrease in number of wet nappies

How to avoid spreading colds:

Colds are caused by viruses and easily spread to other people. Your child is infectious until all their symptoms have gone. This usually takes a week or two.

Colds are spread by germs from coughs and sneezes which can live on hands and surfaces for 24 hours. To reduce the risk of spreading a cold:

- Wash your hands/child's hand often with warm water and soap
- Avoid sharing towels
- Use tissues to trap germs when your child coughs or sneezes
- Bin used tissues as quickly as possible
- Avoid sharing toys with a child who has a cold

If you are concerned about your child's progress, or if they have not improved within 5 -7 days, we advise you to contact your GP or return to the Emergency Department /MIU department where you were seen.

If you are at all concerned about your child, please contact the relevant Emergency Department or Minor Injury Unit (MIU):-

Royal Gwent Hospital: 01633 234056

Nevill Hall Hospital: 01873 732073

Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr (YYF) 01443 802353 or 802349

Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan (YAB) MIU: 01495 363318

Reference:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/common-cold/>

<https://cks.nice.org.uk/common-cold#!scenario>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/coughs-colds-ear-infections/#childrens-colds>

**“This document is available in Welsh /
Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg”.**