



Eric North, MD • P. Senna North, MD

530 Welch St • Silverton, Oregon 97381 • 503-874-6026

---

Children under age 6 years old cannot take many over-the-counter medicines due to safety concerns and lack of sufficient evidence that they are effective. Here are some recommendations for safe ways to ease your child's symptoms:

#### ALL AGES

**Rest** strengthens the immune system to fight infection.

**Fluids** can help loosen up congestion.

**Tylenol or ibuprofen** may be used for fevers or discomfort. Use correct dosing with an actual teaspoon. Overdose problems happen with the "estimation technique".

**Saline nasal drops/spray** are recommended to loosen thick nasal mucus. I suggest loosening nasal mucus with saline drops in infants (< 6 months old) before suctioning with a rubber-bulb syringe. The bulb syringe should be washed with soap and water between each use.

A **humidifier or vaporizer** can also help relieve nasal congestion and cough. Both humidifiers and vaporizers seem to work equally well in relieving symptoms. The main difference between the two is that humidifiers release cool moisture into the air, and vaporizers boil water and release warm moisture into the air. If using a steam vaporizer, be careful about accidental burns. If using a humidifier, there is a higher chance of spreading bacteria in the air and so change the water daily.

#### OVER 1 YEAR OLD

**Honey** is effective in relieving cough. In one study, patients who received honey had a better night's sleep compared to those who received dextromethorphan or no treatment. For children older than 12 months of age, give 1/2 teaspoon of honey 30 minutes prior to bedtime. For children over 6 years, give 1 full teaspoon.

#### OVER 2 YEARS OLD

**Topical antitussives** such as *Vicks VapoRub* contain a combination of menthol, camphor, and eucalyptus oil. These topical rubs should be applied to the neck and chest up to three times daily in children two years of age and older. Dress children in loose clothing covering the site of application to prevent children from touching the application site and preventing ingestion.