

Bronchitis and Other Cough Illnesses in Children



Just because your child has a cough or bronchitis, does NOT mean he or she needs antibiotics. Here is why your doctor MAY NOT prescribe antibiotics for your child:

More than 90% of coughs (including bronchitis) in children are caused by VIRUSES. Antibiotics do not kill VIRUSES. Your body will kill the viruses on its own. The cough can last for a few weeks even after the infection is gone.

You can help your child FEEL better in the meantime.

You CAN:

- ➔ Give extra water, juice and soups to your child.
- ➔ Limit your child's activity and encourage him or her to rest.
- ➔ Teach your child how to gargle with warm water and salt. Make sure the water is not too hot.
- ➔ Apply a cool compress over your child's forehead if he or she has a fever.
- ➔ Use a vaporizer (humidifier) to reduce your child's cough during the night.
- ➔ Give acetaminophen (like Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (like Advil® and Motrin®) for throat pain, headache and/or fever as directed by your doctor. **Do NOT give your child aspirin.**
- ➔ Do NOT use someone else's inhaler or medicine for your child. Sometimes when your doctor thinks it will help, he or she may prescribe an inhaler for your child's cough. This should only be used as directed by your doctor!

If your doctor does prescribe an antibiotic:

- ➔ Give ALL of the antibiotic AS DIRECTED, even if your child feels better before finishing the prescribed antibiotic!
- ➔ STOP the antibiotic and CALL your doctor if a rash or prolonged diarrhea develops.
- ➔ NEVER give your child leftover antibiotics, prescribed to him or her or anyone else.

Over-the-counter cold and cough medications are not recommended for children less than 6 years of age. Consult your doctor to reduce bronchitis and cough symptoms.

Remember to give lots of love and hugs to your child!



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