

Title: My child is coughing and can't sleep - can honey help?

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Abstract: Coughing associated with the common cold usually goes away on its own after several days and does not need to be treated. However, if your child is unable to sleep because of their cough, honey is a safe option that may decrease how often they are coughing. Honey should only be used in children over 1 year of age.

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Will it work?

Honey does not work for everyone, but it may work for your child. It is a safe alternative to over-the-counter cough suppressants and may improve your child's sleep.



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My child is coughing, what should I do?

Coughing is the body's natural way of clearing mucous from the airways. In general, a cough related to the common cold will go away on its own and should not be treated.



However, if your child's cough is interfering with their sleep, you can offer them honey at bedtime only. Honey is an inexpensive option and may help your child.

How much honey do I give?

Ages 1-5 → 0.5 teaspoon

Ages 6-12 → 1 teaspoon

Ages 12+ → 2 teaspoons

Is honey safe?

Honey is safe to give any child over 1 year of age with no allergy to honey. Honey should be avoided in children less than 1 year of age due to the risk of infantile botulism. Side effects are rare but include insomnia and allergic reactions.

What about over-the-counter cough medicines?

Over-the-counter cough suppressants should be avoided in children. Determining the correct dose is difficult and may lead to an accidental overdose. In addition, they do not work well for children.

When should I see a doctor?

You should take your child to see their doctor if they:

- have a fever of 101°F or higher
- have cold symptoms lasting more than 14 days
- have difficulty breathing
- become unresponsive to attempts to wake them

