

Title: What is the Truth about Your Child's Cough and Cold Medicines?

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Abstract: Cough and Cold Medicines are frequently used to treat children's viral infections. There is no good evidence for or against the cough and cold medications effectiveness. The pamphlet provides other useful treatments for children's cough and cold symptoms.

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Remember...

Always take your child to your physician if your child has:

- Temperature >102°F
- Difficulty breathing
- Persistent nausea, vomiting & diarrhea
- Skaing chills
- Persistent cough
- Blue/gray lips, skin or nails



How should I treat my child's cold and cough?

Unfortunately, there are no cures for your child's cough and cold. The time course of these colds usually runs for 1-2 weeks. In the meantime, focus on relieving your child's symptoms:

- Keep your child well hydrated.
- Help your child to get plenty of rest
- Use Tylenol to relieve the fever
- Use drops in the nose to relieve congestion
- Try a humidifier to help increase the air moisture
- Warm salt water gargles for a sore throat
- Bring your child to the physician if the cough or cold lasts longer than 7-10 days



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What is the Truth about Your Child's Cough and Cold Medicines?

Educational Pamphlet

Your Child's Cough & Cold

Why does it occur? Many different viruses can lead to your child developing a cough and cold. These include rhinovirus, coronavirus, respiratory syncytial virus, and parainfluenza virus. These viruses are spread through air borne droplets from sneezing and coughing and through physical contact.

What are the symptoms of a cold? Symptoms can include: sore throat, sneezing, runny nose, cough, watery eyes, ear congestion, fever, headache, loss of appetite.



Treatments of Cough & Cold

If your child is coughing, crying, irritated, keeping you up all night with his illness... What can you do?

Many over-the-counter cough and cold medications advertise the temporary relief of symptoms. Parents swear by them and yet a Food and Drug Administration Advisory Committee recently stated that they are simply not effective.

So what is the truth?



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Answer: *Little evidence exists to show definitively that over-the-counter medicines are effective or not effective.*

In other words, some studies have shown that anti-cough medicines, decongestants, anti-runny nose and sneezing medicines are no more effective than placebo. Other studies have demonstrated limited efficacy in certain combination medicines, (i.e. anti-cough/airway dilator medicines).

Overall, *there are no definite studies* that give a final answer. More clinical trials are needed to look at over-the-counter cough and cold medicines and their efficacy in children.

