

# Cough/colds (under 1's)

This advice is intended for parents/carers taking their child home after consulting a doctor. Your doctor may recommend different treatments depending on your child's condition.



Coughs and colds are extremely common in young children and tend to occur more frequently over the autumn and winter months. They are usually caused by an infection and most children get better by themselves. In general, antibiotics do not make them better more quickly. If they are finding it hard to breath or are too breathless to feed, they may need to be look after in hospital.

## Treatment

Most children with coughs/colds do not require treatment with antibiotics. Antibiotics rarely speed up recovery and often cause side effects such as rash and diarrhoea. They will also promote the development of antibiotic resistant bacteria in your child.




- Keep your child well hydrated by offering them lots of fluids. If your child is not feeding as normal, offer smaller feeds but more frequently
- Cough syrup does not tend to help with coughs
- You can try using saline nose drops or spray if your baby has a blocked nose

## Prevention

It is not always easy to avoid catching these infections. However, good hygiene practices can prevent infections spreading

- Wash your hands regularly and thoroughly
- Use a tissue when coughing or sneezing and put it in the bin
- Avoid sharing glasses or utensils with people who are unwell

## When should I get help?

 <p><b>RED</b></p>	<p><b>If your child has any of the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is going blue around the lips</li> <li>• Has pauses in their breathing or has an irregular breathing pattern or starts grunting</li> <li>• A harsh noise as they breathe in (stridor) present all of the time (even when they are not upset)</li> <li>• Severe difficulty in breathing - too breathless to feed</li> <li>• Becomes pale, mottled and feels abnormally cold to touch</li> <li>• Becomes extremely agitated (crying inconsolably despite distraction), confused or very lethargic (difficult to wake)</li> <li>• Develops a rash that does not disappear with pressure (the 'Glass Test')</li> <li>• Is under 1 month of age with a temperature of 38°C / 100.4°F or above</li> </ul>	<p><b>If your child has any of the following:</b></p> <p>Go to the nearest Hospital Emergency Department or phone <b>999</b></p>
 <p><b>AMBER</b></p>	<p><b>If your child has any of the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has laboured/rapid breathing or they are working hard to breath - drawing in of the muscles below their lower ribs, at their neck or between their ribs (recession).</li> <li>• A harsh breath noise as they breath in (stridor) present only when they are upset</li> <li>• Seems dehydrated (sunken eyes, drowsy or not passed urine for 12 hours)</li> <li>• Is becoming drowsy (excessively sleepy)</li> <li>• Is between 1-3 months of age with a temperature of 38°C / 100°F or above; or 3-6 months of age with a temperature of 39°C / 102.2°F or above (but fever is common in babies up to 2 days after they receive vaccinations).</li> <li>• Has a fever of 38°C or above for more than 5 days</li> <li>• Seems to be getting worse or if you are worried</li> </ul>	<p><b>You need to contact a doctor or nurse today.</b></p> <p>Please ring your GP surgery or call NHS 111 - dial <b>111</b></p>
 <p><b>GREEN</b></p>	<p>If none of the features in the red or amber boxes above are present.</p>	<p><b>Self-care</b></p> <p>Continue providing your child's care at home. If you are still concerned about your child, contact your GP or call NHS 111 – dial <b>111</b></p>