

# SAFE Kids HEALTHY Kids HAPPY Kids

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Parent Help Line



## Facts About Kids and Colds

Colds are caused by viruses. Kids pass these viruses to others by touching one another or by sharing objects like toys or eating utensils. They also pass viruses when they cough and sneeze.



Children with a cold may have a runny or stuffy nose, the sneezes, a cough, aches, pains, a mild fever, and red watery eyes. The bad news—there is no cure for the common cold. The good news—parents can help make their child more comfortable when a cold or flu strikes.

- Give your child plenty of fluids like water and fruit juice. If he has a stuffy nose, he will have to breathe through his mouth. His mouth and throat will become dry. If he has a fever, he will need extra fluids.

- Make sure your child eats *good, healthy* food when she eats. Your child may not feel like eating when she is sick, so she may only eat a little food at a time. Healthy food, not junk food, will help her body fight infection.

- Provide a *clean, cool-mist* vaporizer to help your child breathe easier through a stuffy nose.

- Watch your child closely to see how she feels. Monitor her temperature. You need to know if she is getting better or worse.


- Be patient with your child. Give her lots of TLC – tender, loving care. Children often have behavior changes when they are sick.

Colds are *not* cured by antibiotics. Over-the-counter cold medications are often not helpful. Doctors may give you advice on how to treat a fever. Follow their advice. *Aspirin should never be given to a child with a fever.* Aspirin and fever are associated with Reye's syndrome.

Colds usually go away on their own without problems. Call your doctor, however, if you have a question or your child:

- Gets ear pain,
- Has a very bad sore throat,
- Has trouble breathing,
- Gets worse or is sick for more than 10 days or
- Has a fever longer than 2 days.

Parents can help. Chicken soup and a lot of love heal a child in many ways.

 For more information on childhood illness, go to [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org).

Call the Parent Help Line. We listen. We can find you help.  
544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889 from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week.