

What you need to know about Common Cold

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WHAT IS COMMON

'Common Cold' is a term used to describe a common condition in which people experience a combination of the following symptoms:

- A runny nose
- A blocked nose
- A mild sore throat
- A cough
- Mild headaches
- A fever
- Generally feeling unwell

Young children may also experience:

- Irritabilitu
- Poor feeding
- Diarrhoea



WHAT CAUSES IT?

There are over 200 different types of viruses that can cause Common Cold. These are spread from person to person in droplets of water from the nose or mouth.



>200 VIRUSES CAN CAUSE COMMON COLD

Viruses are tiny crystals that are so small they can't even be seen with a microscope. They take over the machinery of the cells lining the nose and throat and use the cells to make copies of themselves.

The body's immune system will eventually kill the affected cells and the viruses, but this can take up to a week in adults and up to 2 weeks in children.

Bacteria are different to viruses. They are much larger and can been seen under a microscope. They are different to viruses because they are living organisms that don't take over the machinery of cells. However, they do NOT cause a Common Cold.



ANTIBIOTICS DON'T WORK ON **VIRUSES**

Antibiotics are medicines that can kill bacteria but have no effect on viruses. They are therefore NOT used to treat the Common Cold.

Antibiotics can also cause a lot of side effects and can sometimes be harmful.

Using too many antibiotics can lead to bacteria becoming resistant to their effects (Antibiotic Resistance). This in turn results in infections that are difficult or impossible to treat and is a growing problem

ANTIBIOTICS CAN BE USED IN **CERTAIN PEOPLE TO PREVENT COMPLICATIONS FROM DEVELOPING. ANTIBIOTICS DO** NOT HELP PEOPLE WHO ARE OTHERWISE HEALTHY



WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE A COLD?

The symptoms of cold will usually be at their worst 3-5 days after you first become unwell. Thereafter, they should gradually improve, although a cough can sometimes last for up to 2-3 weeks.

There is no specific treatment needed for most healthy people, but you can buy medicine from a pharmacy to help with some of the symptoms. These are:

- Paracetamol
- Ibuprofen
- Topical Nasal Decongestants (for up to 5 days use)

CHECK WITH YOUR PHARMACIST TO MAKE SURE IT IS SAFE FOR YOU TO USE THESE MEDICINES

Be sure to rest if you feel unwell and drink enough water to stay hydrated.

Lozenges and warm drinks can help soothe a sore throat and inhaling the steam from a shower can help relieve a blocked nose. Use saline (salt water) drops for blocked nose in



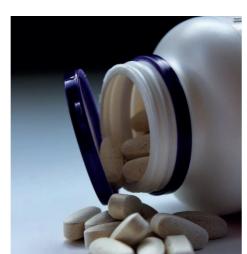
WHEN SHOULD I SEE A DOCTOR?

See your primary care doctor, if your or child's symptoms are not getting better after 3-5 days, or if you feel you are getting worse.



The symptoms of common cold can sometimes lead to complications in some people. See your doctor if you have any of the following:

- · Aged over 65 years
- · Child less than 1 year
- Pregnant
- · Diabetes mellitus
- · Lung disease
- Heart disease
- Kidney disease
- Liver disease
- Neurological (brain) problems
- Problems with your immune system



THE FOLLOWING MEASURES ARE NOT PROVEN TO BE BENEFICIAL IN TREATING COMMON COLD:

- Cough syrups
- Cough suppressants (containing codeine)
- Echinacea
- Chinese herbal remedies

ALWAYS TELL YOUR DOCTOR IF YOU ARE TAKING ANY HERBAL OR **HEALTH SUPPLEMENTS AND ANY** OTHER MEDICINES YOU HAVE **BEEN PRESCRIBED**



The symptoms of cold can also be similar to those of serious illnesses.

If you, or your child, have any of the following symptoms, call an ambulance or go immediately to an Emergency Department or Pediatric Emergency

- DIFFICULTY BREATHING
- BLUISH-COLOURED LIPS
- DIFFICULTY SWALLOWING
- DROOLING
- DRY EYES
- DRY MOUTH
- LOW URINE VOLUME
- FEVER WITH COLD HANDS OR FEET • NECK STIFFNESS
- PAIN ON LOOKING AT BRIGHT
- SEVERE HEADACHE
- A SKIN RASH

The viruses that cause the Common Cold are spread by coughing, sneezing, kissing or touch.

ADDITONAL INFORMATION

The Ministry of Public Health has published a National Clinical Guideline advising doctors on how to treat patients with Common Cold.

The Guideline is available to the public from the MOPH website:

www.moph.gov.qa



TAKE TIME OFF WORK OR SCHOOL IF YOU. OR YOUR CHILD. HAVE A FEVER TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF INFECTION

To prevent the people around you from catching

the Cold from you, or your child, should do the

· Wash your hands with soap and water,

especially after blowing your nose.

Cover your nose and mouth when coughing

Don't share towels with other people.

· Avoid shaking hands, hugging or kissing

the children has a Cold.

Don't allow children to share toys if one of

following:

or sneezing.

