



## Respiratory Syncytial Virus

Your child has been diagnosed or is suspected of having respiratory syncytial virus RSV is a very common virus that affects the nose, throat, and lungs. It often causes cold-like symptoms, but in some babies and young children it can lead to more serious breathing symptoms such as bronchiolitis or pneumonia. Symptoms can include:

- Runny or stuffy nose
- Cough
- Fever
- Sneezing
- Decreased appetite
- Wheezing
- Irritability
- Trouble feeding
- Mild fatigue or lower activity than usual

### Causes

- RSV is spread easily from person to person through respiratory droplets, hands, and contaminated surfaces. It is very common in infants and children, and most children get RSV at least once by age 2.
- In very young infants, RSV may sometimes cause pauses in breathing, decreased activity, or poor feeding rather than obvious cold symptoms.

### Expected Course

- Most RSV infections improve on their own in 1 to 2 weeks, though cough can linger longer. Symptoms may get worse around days 3 to 5 before starting to improve.

### Care & Treatment

- **Runny Nose with Lots of Discharge: Blow or Suction the Nose.** The nasal mucus and discharge is washing viruses and bacteria out of the nose and sinuses. Having your child blow the nose is all that is needed. Teach your child how to blow the nose at age 2 or 3. For younger children, gently suction the nose with a suction bulb. If the skin around the nostrils becomes sore or irritated, apply a little petroleum jelly twice a day. Cleanse the skin first with water.
  - **Nasal Saline Rinses to Open a Blocked Nose.** Use saline (salt water) nose drops or spray to loosen up the dried mucus. **How Often:** Do nasal saline rinses when your child can't breathe through the nose. Saline nose drops or spray can be bought in any drugstore. No prescription is needed.
  - **Fluids - Offer More.** Encourage your child to drink adequate fluids to prevent dehydration. This will also thin out the nasal secretions and loosen any phlegm in the lungs.
  - **Humidifier-** If the air in your home is dry, use a humidifier.
  - **Medicines for Colds**
- Pain - Use acetaminophen (e.g., Tylenol) or ibuprofen for muscle aches, headaches, or sore throat.
- Sore Throat - Use hard candy if over 6 years old. Sip warm chicken broth if over 1 year old. Some children prefer cold foods such as popsicles or ice cream.
- Fever Medicine
- For fever above 102 F (39 C), give acetaminophen (e.g., Tylenol) or ibuprofen.
  - For fevers 100-102 F (37.8 to 39 C), fever medicines are not needed. Reason: Fever turns on your body's immune system. Fever helps fight the infection.

Medications:

Acetaminophen (Tylenol): ALL AGES	Infant/Children's Suspension Liquid 160mg/5mL	Junior Strength Chewable Tablet
Weight	Dose	Tablets
6 -11 lbs	¼ tsp or 1.25 mL	
12-17 lbs	½ tsp or 2.5 mL	
18-23 lbs	¾ tsp or 3.75 mL	
24-35 lbs	1 tsp or 5 mL	
36-47 lbs	1 ½ tsp or 7.5 mL	
48-59 lbs	2 tsp or 10 mL	2 tablets
60-71 lbs	2 ½ tsp or 12.5 mL	2 ½ tablets
72-95 lbs	3 tsp or 15 mL	3 tablets
>96 lbs		4 tablets

\*Use weight to dose. One dose lasts 4-6 hours.

Ibuprofen (Motrin): > 6 MONTHS OF AGE	Infant Drops 50mg/1.25 mL (Ages 6 - 23 months)	Children's Suspension 100mg/5 mL (Ages 2- 11)	Children's Chewable Tablets 50mg	Junior Strength Chewable Tablets or Capsules 100mg
Weight	Dropperful	Dose	Tablets	Tablet or Capsule
12-17 lbs	1 = 1.25 mL			
18-23 lbs	1 ½ = 1.875 mL			
24-35 lbs		1 tsp or 5 mL	2 tablets	
36-47 lbs		1 ½ tsp or 7.5 mL	3 tablets	
48-59 lbs		2 tsp or 10 mL	4 tablets	2 tablets
60-71 lbs		2 ½ tsp or 12.5 mL	5 tablets	2 ½ tablets
71-95 lbs		3 tsp or 15 mL	6 tablets	3 tablets

\*Use weight to dose. One dose lasts 6-8 hours.

Return to Childcare/School

- Your child may return when:
- Fever has been gone for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medicine
- Breathing is comfortable
- They are drinking adequately
- They feel well enough to participate in normal activities

When to Call

Continue Self-Care at Home

- Mild cough, congestion, and runny nose
- Drinking okay
- Breathing comfortably
- Symptoms are gradually improving

Call Office to be Seen Within 24-72 Hours

- Fever lasting more than **3 days**
- Ear pain
- Cough that is worsening instead of improving
- Poor feeding
- Trouble sleeping because of congestion
- Symptoms not improving after several days
- Child younger than **3 months** with cold symptoms

### Call Office to be Urgently Seen

- Drinking **less than half** of normal
- Fewer wet diapers
- Breathing faster than usual
- Wheezing that is getting worse
- Child seems much more tired or less alert
- High-risk child with worsening symptoms (prematurity, chronic lung disease, congenital heart disease, weakened immune system)

### Go to the ER now

- Retractions (skin pulling in between ribs or at the neck with breathing)
- Lips, face, or nail beds look blue, pale, or gray
- Trouble breathing
- Unable to drink enough to stay hydrated
- Dehydration signs: no urine in **over 8 hours**, very dry mouth, no tears
- Newborn or very young infant acting abnormal, very sleepy, or difficult to wake

### Call 911 now

- Severe difficulty breathing
- Grunting with each breath
- Pauses in breathing
- Child is limp, unresponsive, or cannot cry/speak because of breathing distress