

Discharge Instructions

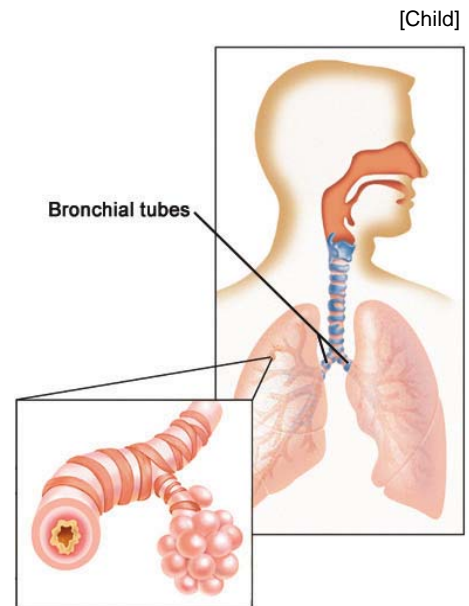
VIRAL RESPIRATORY ILLNESS

Your child has a viral Upper Respiratory Illness (URI), which is another term for the COMMON COLD. The virus is contagious during the first few days. It is spread through the air by coughing, sneezing or by direct contact (touching your sick child then touching your own eyes, nose or mouth). Frequent hand washing will decrease risk of spread. Most viral illnesses resolve within 7-14 days with rest and simple home remedies. However, they may sometimes last up to four weeks. Antibiotics will not kill a virus and are generally not prescribed for this condition.

HOME CARE:

- 1) **FLUIDS:** Fever increases water loss from the body. For infants under 1 year old, continue regular formula or breast feedings. Between feedings give plain water or Oral Rehydration Solution. (You can buy this as Pedialyte, Infalyte or Rehydralyte from grocery and drug stores. No prescription needed.) For children over 1 year old, give plenty of fluids like water, juice, 7-Up, ginger-ale, lemonade or popsicles.
- 2) **EATING:** If your child doesn't want to eat solid foods, it's okay for a few days, as long as she/he drinks lots of fluid.
- 3) **REST:** Keep children with fever at home resting or playing quietly until the fever is gone. Your child may return to day care or school when the fever is gone and she/he is eating well and feeling better.
- 4) **SLEEP:** Periods of sleeplessness and irritability are common. A congested child will sleep best with the head and upper body propped up on pillows or with the head of the bed frame raised on a 6 inch block. An infant may sleep in a car-seat placed in the crib or in a baby swing.
- 5) **COUGH:** Coughing is a normal part of this illness. A cool mist humidifier at the bedside may be helpful. Over-the-counter cough and cold medicine has not been proven to be any more helpful than a placebo (sweet syrup with no medicine in it). We recommend not using these medicines in order to avoid their side effects. Don't expose your child to cigarette smoke. It can make the cough worse.
- 6) **NASAL CONGESTION:** Suction the nose of infants with a rubber bulb syringe. You may put 2-3 drops of saltwater (saline) nose drops in each nostril before suctioning to help remove secretions. Saline nose drops are available without a prescription or make by adding 1/4 teaspoon table salt in 1 cup of water.
- 7) **FEVER:** Use Tylenol (acetaminophen) for fever, fussiness or discomfort. In infants over six months of age, you may use ibuprofen (Children's Motrin) instead of Tylenol. (Aspirin should never be used in anyone under 18 years of age who is ill with a fever. It may cause severe liver damage.)
- 8) **PREVENTING SPREAD:** Washing your hands after touching your sick child will help prevent the spread of this viral illness to yourself and to other children.

FOLLOW UP as directed by our staff.



Discharge Instructions (con't)

RETURN PROMPTLY or contact your doctor if any of the following occur:

- Fever reaches 105.0°F (40.5° C) rectal, or 104.0°F (40.0° C) oral, not relieved by Tylenol or Motrin
- Fever remains over 102.0° F (38.9° C) rectal, or 101.0° F (38.3° C) oral, for three days
- Fast breathing (birth to 6 wks: over 60 breaths/min; 6 wk - 2 yr: over 45 breaths/min, 3-6 yr: over 35 breaths/min, 7-10 yrs: over 30 breaths/min, more than 10 yrs old: over 25 breaths/min)
- Increased wheezing or difficulty breathing
- Earache, sinus pain, stiff or painful neck, headache, repeated diarrhea or vomiting
- Unusual fussiness, drowsiness or confusion
- New rash appears
- No wet diapers for 8 hours, no tears when crying, "sunken" eyes or dry mouth