

Discharge Instructions

VIRAL RESPIRATORY ILLNESS w/ Wheezing

You have an Upper Respiratory Illness (URI) caused by a virus. This illness is contagious during the first few days. It is spread through the air by coughing and sneezing or by direct contact (touching the sick person and then touching your own eyes, nose or mouth). When the infection causes a lot of irritation, the air passages can go into spasm. This causes wheezing and shortness of breath.

Most viral illnesses resolve within 7-10 days with rest and simple home remedies, although the illness may sometimes last for several weeks. Antibiotics will not kill a virus and are generally not prescribed for this condition.

HOME CARE:

- 1) If symptoms are severe, rest at home for the first 2-3 days. When resuming activity, don't let yourself become overly tired.
- 2) Avoid exposure to cigarette smoke (yours or others).
- 3) You may use acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) to control pain, unless another medicine was prescribed. [NOTE: If you have chronic liver or kidney disease or ever had a stomach ulcer or GI bleeding, talk with your doctor before using these medicines.] (Aspirin should never be used in anyone under 18 years of age who is ill with a fever. It may cause severe liver damage.)
- 4) Your appetite may be poor so a light diet is fine. Avoid dehydration by drinking 6-8 glasses of fluids per day (water, soft, drinks, juices, tea, soup, etc.). Extra fluids will help loosen secretions in the nose and lungs.
- 5) Over-the-counter cold medicines will not shorten the duration of the illness, but may be helpful for the following symptoms: cough (Robitussin DM); sore throat (Chloraseptic lozenges or spray); nasal and sinus congestion (Actifed or Sudafed). [NOTE: Do not use decongestants if you have high blood pressure.]

FOLLOW UP with your doctor or as advised if you are not improving over the next week.

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

- Cough with lots of colored sputum (mucus) or blood in your sputum
- Chest pain, shortness of breath, wheezing or difficulty breathing
- Severe headache; face, neck or ear pain
- Fever over 100.5°F for more than three days
- Unable to swallow due to throat pain

