

HOLTON DIRECTCARE

Dr. Lassey's Recommended Treatments for Upper Respiratory Infections (URIs)

Most URIs are viral in nature and therefore antibiotics are not usually going to be helpful. In fact, antibiotics are often harmful, causing rash, diarrhea, or bloody diarrhea-causing gut infections. I've seen this happen, and you don't want any part of it...trust me. We instead focus on reducing symptoms until your immune system is able to catch up.

Signs that it is more likely bacterial than viral and need may need an antibiotic:

- Symptoms last more than 10-14 days
- You get "Second Sickening" - you start to get better and then get a lot worse all of a sudden

Strep throat almost always comes with high fever, NO cough, pus pockets on the tonsils, and lymph nodes in the neck. It is also much more common in children than adults. Presence of cough makes it much more likely that it is viral.

Treatment based on symptoms: (* = in stock at Holton Direct Care)

Congestion

- Sudafed (30-60 mg every 6-8 hrs) is a decongestant (OTC but you have to show your ID at the pharmacy). It can raise your blood pressure, but is OK to take if you have HTN and your BP is controlled.
- *Afrin (one spray each nostril twice a day for NO MORE THAN 3 days) is a decongestant as well and helps with stuffy noses and difficulty breathing at night time. It causes problems if you use it more than 3 days in a row.
- Antihistamines: *Zyrtec (10 mg daily; non-sedating) and *Benadryl (25-50 mg every 6 hrs as needed; sedating). Benadryl is safe and helps with sleep. These work better for those who have allergies as well.
- *Flonase (2 sprays in each nostril daily) is a nasal steroid. It works best if you have seasonal allergies.
- *Nasal Sinus Rinse: Make your own with one cup distilled or boiled water, ½ tsp salt, ½ tsp baking soda. You can also buy saline rinses OTC as packets or pre-mixed. These clear out the sinuses and get rid of snot.
- For Children: no decongestants are to be used. Children's benadryl based on age, nasal saline and suctioning work well with a bulb suction or with a "nosefrida".

Cough

- Honey reduces both cough and sore throat in evidence-based studies. Helpful in warm drinks like tea, also.
- Cough Suppressant: Dextromethorphan (20 mg every 6 hrs; medicine in robitussin or delysym for cough) is the most effective cough syrup – as beneficial as codeine-containing cough syrups with less side effects.
- *Tessalon Perles (100 mg every 6 hrs) reduces cough reflex by anesthetizing the lung and trachea
- Expectorant: Mucinex (200 mg every 4-6 hrs). Idea is to decrease size of sputum droplets. Doesn't work in studies though the idea is good. If it helps you with symptom, go for it! It doesn't have many side effects.

Pain/Aches/Chills – Ask about children dosing

- NSAIDS: *Ibuprofen (600-800 mg every 8 hrs) You can take as long as you are not on another NSAID and don't have kidney disease.
- Acetaminophen: *Tylenol (1000 mg every 6-8 hrs). You can take as long as you're not taking combination meds with tylenol and don't have liver disease.

Sore Throat

- *Chloraseptic Spray numbs the back of the throat
- Salt Water gargles. Mix one teaspoon of table salt in warm water and gargle for 30 sec, 3x per day.

Get plenty of sleep, wash your hands and use hand sanitizer to keep from spreading the virus, and give it some time. If not getting better, let me know. Other treatments may be recommended or restricted based on your past medical history and current medications.