

Cough

Cough - what is it?

Cough is the sudden expulsion of air from the lungs. It is the bodies' way of clearing unwanted material from our airways and protecting us from pneumonia. Cough can happen in spasms where continuous coughing lasts more than five minutes. Cough can be dry and hacking or wet or even barky sounding.

Cough- how long will it last?

Most coughs are due to viral infections and will last 10 to 14 days. Most young children will get 8 to 10 colds per year, especially if they are in day care.

Cough - how to control it?

For children over 2 years of age.

Remember that cough is a protective reflex that clears our lungs. Cough should only be suppressed if it is a dry cough that is interfering with school, sleep, or work.

- Dextromethorphan (DM) is the most common cough suppressant available.
- Delsym is one name brand available in a long-acting formula. You may also talk to your pharmacist about other over-the-counter products.
- Cough drops can be used for children over the age of four and any brand will work.
- Humidifiers are a great way to help loosen a cough, but generally medications should not be added to humidifiers because it may irritate your child's airway more.
- Avoid all cigarette smoke exposure.
- Milk avoidance has only been proven helpful for coughs in children that have a milk allergy. However, good fluid intake will help your child.

Cough- when to call the office?

- If your child's breathing becomes difficult.
- Your child's activity level drops significantly and they are acting very sick.
- Your child has audible wheezing.
- Your child has a fever over 103.0 degrees.
- Your child has a fever over 100.5 for more than three days.
- The cough lasts for more than 2 weeks.
- The cough is accompanied by sore throat or ear pain.
- Your infant less than six months has a cough, especially if it is interfering with sleeping or eating.