

Treating the sniffles

Children are prime targets for the common cold - those under age five get twice as many respiratory illnesses as the typical adult.

Their less-developed immune systems and generally poor hygienic practices make children more susceptible to contagious diseases than adults.

When a cold attacks, children should not necessarily be treated the same way as adults.

Children's metabolisms and weights are different from adults and require smaller dosages and altered formulations.

Many nonprescription cough and cold products are formulated specifically for children.

Your local independent pharmacist can help you choose the best medicine for your child's age and weight, and counsel you on correct administration of the medication.

Here are some tips on administering medicine to young children provided by NARD, the national association representing the nation's 40,000 independent retail

pharmacies:

For infants, use a calibrated dropper or oral syringe, give small amounts of medications to prevent choking, place medication to the back and side of the infant's mouth and physically comfort the child while administering the medication.

Let toddlers choose a position to take medication, allow them to rinse with a favourite drink and explain the benefit of taking medications.

In preschool-age children, place the tablet or capsule near the back of the tongue and have the child swallow with water or other drink.

Allow the child to make decisions about where to take the medication, which medication to take first and the type of drink to use.

Parents should understand what is in the medication, how to administer the drug and when to expect positive results.

Your independent pharmacist can answer those questions, and any others you might have.



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