

West Virginia Physicians for Wise Use of Antibiotics

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Bronchitis,
Coughs
& Your Child





Cough / Bronchitis



What causes bronchitis in children?

Bronchitis is most commonly caused by viruses, and is often called a "chest cold." The main symptom of bronchitis is coughing, and other symptoms may be a runny or stuffy nose, and slight fever.

What can be done for bronchitis?

- The best treatment for bronchitis is patience... bronchitis usually goes away on it's own.
- **Antibiotics WILL NOT help your child feel better.**

What can I do for my child?

- Offer plenty of fluids
- Extra rest/sleep
- Acetaminophen or ibuprofen for slight fever
- Run a vaporizer to add moisture

Should I watch for other symptoms?

Your child's cough should at least show some improvement within 10 days. Call your doctor or take your child back to the doctor **IF**:

- cough has not improved at all
- your child develops a high fever → →



Antibiotics: Wise Use, Not Overuse!!!



... other symptoms?

- your child begins breathing really fast
- your child has trouble breathing
- your child has difficulty swallowing
- your child has chest pain

Any or all of these symptoms could mean that your child has a more serious illness, such as pneumonia, and your doctor will need to see your child.

What else should I know?

Disease-causing bacteria can become resistant to antibiotics when antibiotics are used improperly or overused. Antibiotic resistant bacteria are **harder** to kill, and pose serious health threats to your child & others. Some illnesses caused by resistant bacteria must be treated in the hospital, and some resistant bacteria cannot be treated at all.

Can I help stop resistant bacteria?

- Talk with your doctor... ask if your illness is caused by bacteria or viruses
- Let your doctor decide when antibiotics are necessary and useful
- Take antibiotics as directed
- Throw away any unused antibiotics
- Prevent infections... wash hands with soap & warm water to stop spread of bacteria & viruses
- Protect your children from cigarette smoke