

## Swine Flu Treatment

The main symptoms of Swine Flu are a cough, sore throat, runny nose and fever. Usually there's more muscle pain, headache, fever and chills than seen with the common cold. If you think your child has Swine Flu, here's what you can do to make him feel better:

- **First:** For a stuffy or blocked nose, use saline (or warm-water) nose drops followed by nose blowing or suctioning. Use these "nasal washes" whenever your child can't breathe through the nose. You can buy saline spray without a prescription. Saline nose drops can also be made by adding 1/2 teaspoon of salt to 1 cup of warm water. Use 2 or 3 drops at a time.
- **Second:** For throat pain, Tylenol or ibuprofen is very helpful. Children over 6 years old can also suck on hard candy. Children over 1 year old can sip warm chicken broth or other warm liquids.
- **Third:** For coughs, try to soothe the throat. For children over age 6, give cough drops. If your child is over 1 year of age, give honey. The dosage would be 1/2 to 1 teaspoon as needed. Never give honey to babies. If honey is not available, you can use corn syrup. Drugstore cough medicines are not as helpful as honey. A coughing spasm is defined as over 5 minutes of continuous coughing. For these, relax the airway by taking your child into the warm mist of a foggy bathroom. Also, give him warm fluids to drink.
- **Fourth:** Flu can cause body aches that include leg pain, back pain, chest pain and headache. Give ibuprofen to make these sore muscles feel better.
- **Fifth:** For fevers over 102 degrees, it's OK to give Tylenol or ibuprofen. Remember that fever is one of the ways your body fights infections, so don't try to turn it off. By the way, children and adolescents who have influenza should never take aspirin because of the risk of Reye's syndrome.
- **Sixth:** For diet, mainly encourage your child to drink adequate fluids to prevent dehydration. This will also thin out the nasal secretions and the loosen the phlegm in the lungs.
- **Seventh:** Tamiflu is an antiviral medicine that may be useful for some children. The Centers for Disease Control recommends Tamiflu be prescribed for **High-Risk** children with underlying health problems, if they come down with Swine Flu symptoms. Healthy children under 2 years of age are also considered **High-Risk**. Most healthy children over 2 years old do not need Tamiflu and recover with the symptom care that we have already discussed.
- **Finally:** Your job is to keep your child comfortable. Determine your child's main symptoms and treat them.

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