

AYAM Adolescent-Young Adult Medicine

14 East 90th St. 1B New York, NY 10128

Tel 212-987-1414 Fax 212-987-1518

www.ayam-nyc.com

Caring for Your Common Cold

Most of us get a few colds a year. Since the “common cold” is generally considered a mild illness, we get little sympathy while ill and are expected to still attend school or work. Since it is caused by a virus (and therefore NOT treated with or helped by an antibiotic), the best we can do is try to find ways to feel a bit better and to get rid of the cold as fast as we can. The symptoms of a cold often change as the cold develops and eventually subsides, generally over 1-2-3 weeks; listed below are various over-the-counter medications or other remedies *targeted to specific symptoms*. **We recommend targeting your symptom(s), and avoiding over-the-counter medications with multiple ingredients.**

To get rid of your cold ASAP: GET AS MUCH REST AS POSSIBLE

Icky-achy feeling and sometimes “feverish” (feel hot/cold):

Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) 2 tabs=400 mg every 4-6 hours

OR acetaminophen (Tylenol) 2 tabs=650 mg every 4-6 hrs

Sore throat:

Ibuprofen/acetaminophen as above

Lozenges such as Cepastat or Cepacol...or cough drops

Hot tea with honey/ginger or clear soup; sorbet or popsicles

Fluids at bedside; gargles with salt water

Hot steamy shower, especially in the morning, when your throat is most dry

Stuffy nose:

Nose spray, such as Afrin 2X/day for maximum of 3 days ; saline nose spray or netipot “Sudafed” as directed (prefer “phenylephrine “ as main ingredient; avoid if too drying)

Mucinex or Robitussin may relieve nasal congestion

Hot steamy shower

Cloggy ears:

Afrin nose spray (maximum 3 days) plus “Sudafed” (see above)

If persists, may need prescription nasal spray

Dry cough:

Fluids, cough drops, humidifier at night, hot steamy shower

Robitussin DM or Mucinex DM (guaifenesin + dextromethorphan) as directed

If persists or interrupts sleep, may need a prescription cough suppressant

Wet cough: same as above

If persists may need a prescription expectorant

Hoarseness: voice rest, cough drops, hot tea with honey/ginger; hot steamy shower

BE SURE TO CALL US BACK IF:

Fever (over 100.5), ear pain, face pain,

Severe or worsening sore throat and /or difficulty swallowing

Severe headache or stiff neck

Chest pain and/or shortness of breath; wheezing; severe or persistent cough