

is impossible to prevent. The best methods for preventing transmission of these viruses are frequent hand washing and avoiding touching one's eyes, nose, and mouth. Children are more susceptible because they have not yet developed resistance to many viruses. Very young infants are subject to relatively serious complications; therefore, they should be protected from exposure.

Nursing Care Management

The common cold is often the parents' first introduction to an illness in their infant. Most discomfort of nasopharyngitis is related to the nasal obstruction, especially in small infants. Elevating the head of the bed or crib mattress assists with drainage of secretions. Suctioning and vaporization may also provide relief. Saline nose drops and gentle suction with a bulb syringe before feeding and sleep time may be useful.

Maintaining adequate fluid intake is essential. Although a child's appetite for solid foods is usually diminished for several days, it is important to offer appropriate fluids to prevent dehydration.

Because nasopharyngitis is spread from secretions, the best means for prevention is avoiding contact with affected persons. This goal is difficult to accomplish when large numbers of people are confined in a small area for a long time, such as classrooms, and daycare centers. Family members with a cold should carefully dispose of tissues, not share towels, glasses, or eating utensils, cover the mouth and nose with tissues when coughing or sneezing, and wash hands thoroughly after nose blowing or sneezing. The most frequent carriers of infection are the human hands, which deposit viruses on doorknobs, faucets, and other everyday objects. Children should wash their hands thoroughly or use hand sanitizer and avoid touching their eyes, noses, and mouths.

Family Support

Support and reassurance are important elements of care for families of young children with recurrent upper respiratory infections (URIs). Because URIs are frequent in children younger than 3 years old, they may need reassurance that frequent colds are a normal part of childhood and that by 5 years old, their children will have developed immunity to many viruses. When children spend time in daycare centers, their infection rate is higher than if they are cared