

## Therapeutic Management

Children with nasopharyngitis are managed at home. There is no specific treatment, and effective vaccines are not available.

Antipyretics may be indicated for fever and discomfort (see [Chapter 20](#) for management of fever). Fluids and rest are recommended. The provision of a humidified environment and increasing oral fluids may be beneficial to some children with a cold.

Cough suppressants containing dextromethorphan should be used with caution (cough is a protective way of clearing secretions) but may be prescribed every 6 to 8 hours for a dry, hacking cough, especially at night. However, some preparations contain 22% alcohol and can cause adverse effects, such as confusion, hyperexcitability, dizziness, nausea, and sedation. Parents should monitor the child carefully for potential adverse effects. Recent concerns regarding serious side effects of cough and cold preparations in young children, particularly infants, and lack of convincing evidence that such medications are effective in reducing symptoms have prompted recommendations by health experts to carefully evaluate the benefits and risks of recommending such preparations for children younger than 6 years old ([Yang and So, 2014](#)). Over-the-counter cold preparation such as pseudoephedrine and some antihistamines are not appropriate for the treatment of the common cold in infants and toddlers; these may cause serious side effects in such children and have been associated with death in infants ([Hampton, Nguyen, Edwards, et al, 2013](#)). The American Academy of Pediatrics' position on use of over-the-counter cough and cold medications is that they do not work for children younger than 4 years old and in some cases may pose a health risk ([American Academy of Pediatrics, 2015](#)).

Antihistamines are largely ineffective in treatment of nasopharyngitis. These drugs have a weak atropine-like effect that dries secretions, but they can cause drowsiness or, paradoxically, have a stimulatory effect on children. There is no support for the usefulness of expectorants, and antibiotics are usually not indicated because most infections are viral.

## Prevention

Nasopharyngitis is so widespread in the general population that it