



## Treatment of Cough Associated With the Common Cold

Do you have a cough to go along with your cold? It's pretty common, and certainly a miserable experience. The good news is that it will improve on its own. You do not need to take any medication to overcome your cough.

### What does the evidence say?

The evidence around cough medicine containing an ingredient called *dextromethorphan* tells us that it doesn't work in children and the benefit to adults is insufficient to recommend its use.

### What can I do instead?

The common cold is just that: very common. The best course of treatment is to wash your hands regularly, drink plenty of fluids, and get some rest. If you have pain (though not usual), you may use acetaminophen or a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug like ibuprofen.

Remember that a cold is different from the flu. Cold symptoms include a runny or stuffed nose, sore throat, sneezing, cough, and mild tiredness. Flu symptoms are much more severe.

### Questions?

If you have further questions, please contact your health care provider.

#### References:

Allan GM, Arroll B. Prevention and treatment of the common cold: making sense of the evidence. *CMAJ* [Internet]. 2014 Feb 18; 186(3):190-9.

Over-the-counter cough syrup preparations for adults and children: clinical effectiveness. Ottawa: CADTH; 2010 May 18. (CADTH rapid response report: list of abstracts).

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