

Jenny Lind Children Hospital

Upper Respiratory Tract Infections

We have diagnosed your child with an upper respiratory tract infection (URTI) and we are happy for you to continue caring for them at home.

What is an URTI?

The upper respiratory tract is the nose and throat. Your child has an infection of their upper respiratory tract which means that it is swollen and sore.

Most of these infections are caused by viruses, so antibiotics will not help your child to get better.

Sometimes we might prescribe antibiotics if we think your child has a serious bacterial infection of their upper respiratory tract. Some bacterial infections get better on their own without antibiotics. We have carefully assessed your child to make this decision.

What should I do at home?

Children often stop eating and drinking if their throat is sore, which can lead them to becoming dehydrated. It's important to ensure that they have pain relief to prevent this, so give them regular paracetamol and/or ibuprofen, as directed on the bottle or pack.

Encourage them to drink small amounts often. If they won't eat, make sure they are drinking more than just water, as this could make their blood sugar levels drop, causing them to become drowsy. Ice lollies, jelly, ice cream and milkshakes can often tempt them to eat and drink.

When should I worry?

Your child should get better in a few days. Call your GP, go to your local walk-in centre or call 111 if:

- They have taken less than half of their usual feeds/diet
- They have not passed urine in 6 hours
- Their temperature is still high after 5 days
- Any new symptoms occur

Call 999 if:

- They are having difficulty breathing
- They are drowsy or unresponsive