



YOUR CUSTOMISED MANAGEMENT PLAN

Patient name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

You have an infection of the ear, nose, throat, sinuses and/or chest. It is most likely caused by one of the many common viruses that circulate in our community.

Antibiotics are not the best treatment for these infections. They won't treat the symptoms or stop it from getting worse.

Rest, home remedies, decongestants and simple pain relievers can help you feel better while your body's immune system fights off the infection.

What you can do to feel better

Tick where appropriate

- Rest
- Gargle warm salty water
- Suck on an ice cube or a throat lozenge
- Use salt water (saline) nasal drops or spray
- Inhale steam from the shower*
- Drink something soothing (e.g. a honey and lemon drink)
- Apply moisturiser to soothe dry skin around the nose
- Use a decongestant nasal spray or drops
- Take a decongestant tablet or mixture
- Take paracetamol or ibuprofen (adults may take aspirin)
- Other _____

Advice or dosage

*Don't inhale steam from a bowl of hot water because of the risk of burns

If you have other medical conditions or your symptoms worsen

- A respiratory tract infection can make an ongoing medical condition — such as asthma or diabetes — worse. See your doctor if this happens
- Contact your doctor if you don't begin to feel better after a few days, if your symptoms worsen, if new symptoms develop or you get side effects.
- Other: _____

Signature: _____

Practice/pharmacy stamp:

MANAGING YOUR RESPIRATORY TRACT INFECTION

Antibiotics won't help you get better quickly, and may give you side effects

- ▶ Your respiratory tract infection is most likely caused by a virus; antibiotics kill bacteria, not viruses
- ▶ Antibiotics can cause side effects like diarrhoea, thrush and allergic reactions

Antibiotic resistance is a growing problem

- ▶ Using antibiotics when you don't need to may make them less effective when you do
- ▶ Infections caused by antibiotic-resistant bacteria can be difficult to treat, last for a long time and spread to others

But there are steps you can take to feel better

- ▶ Rest, to allow your immune system to fight off the virus
- ▶ Drink something soothing. Ensure children drink their usual amount of fluids
- ▶ Stop smoking or avoid exposure to cigarette smoke

... and to help prevent the spread of respiratory tract infections

- ▶ Cover your mouth when sneezing or coughing
- ▶ Use tissues to blow your nose, and dispose of them after use
- ▶ Wash hands with soap, especially before preparing or eating food and after blowing your nose
- ▶ Avoid sharing cups, glasses and cutlery

Use symptom-relief medicines wisely

- ▶ Follow the instructions on the label or take as directed by your doctor or pharmacist. Stop taking the medicine when you feel better
- ▶ **Some medicines are not safe for children**
Do not use:
 - aspirin in children under 12 years of age
 - *cough and cold* and *cold and flu* medicines in children under 6 years of age

Your doctor or pharmacist can help you choose an appropriate product for your child.

- ▶ **Be aware that some people cannot use decongestants, or common pain relievers** like paracetamol, ibuprofen or aspirin, because they:
 - have particular medical conditions (e.g. very high blood pressure or severe heart disease)
 - take certain other medicines (e.g. some medicines to treat depression)
 - are elderly
 - are pregnant or breastfeeding.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist for help if you take other medicines or have other health problems.

A decongestant may help stop a runny nose or relieve blocked sinuses. But don't use them for more than 3–5 days.

Contact your doctor straight away ...

- ▶ if you or your child develop any of the following:
 - temperature higher than 38.5°C or chills
 - shortness of breath, noisy or fast breathing or difficulty breathing
 - neck stiffness
 - severe headache
 - light hurting the eyes
 - chest pain
 - difficulty waking up or unusual drowsiness
 - a skin rash
 - pale or mottled skin
 - vomiting
 - persistent cough
 - aching muscles
 - earache.
- ▶ if your child or baby has any of the following:
 - bulging of the soft spot on top of the baby's head (the fontanelle)
 - a high temperature (in babies under 6 months of age)
 - excessive irritability
 - a strange high-pitched cry
 - lack of energy
 - loss of appetite/not drinking/feeding poorly.

Disclaimer

NPS takes reasonable care to ensure this information is accurate and up-to-date at the time of creation. It is for your information only and is not medical advice. NPS does not warrant its completeness and excludes liability where permitted by law.



Call **Medicines Line** to speak with a **health professional** about your medicines on **1300 MEDICINE** (1300 633 424), Mon–Fri 9am–5pm. Calls will initially be answered by *healthdirect Australia*.