

## Understand your symptoms

Respiratory tract infections causing a runny or blocked nose, cough, sore throat or other cold symptoms are extremely common

A healthy immune system can fight these infections without antibiotic treatment and most healthy adults and children will recover in one to three weeks

Products for specific symptoms will help you or your child feel better while the body fights the infection

## When should I worry?

It is natural to worry about symptoms, especially in children who may find it hard to explain what is wrong

Your doctor or pharmacy can:

- 🔄 help rule out more serious illness
- 🔄 provide advice on how you or your child can feel better

It is also important to seek advice if you have an underlying medical condition that could affect your ability to fight off infection



## How long will my symptoms last?

It is normal for colds, sore throats, earache and coughs to take several days or weeks to clear



Symptoms can be irritating and may affect daily activities. Your pharmacist or doctor can advise you on how to feel better sooner

**If symptoms worsen, last longer than expected or new symptoms develop contact your doctor for further advice**

## How can I feel better?

Ask your doctor or pharmacist which products are right for you and are proven to provide fast relief for your specific symptoms

Many different types of medicines are available to meet individual needs, such as pain relief tablets or throat lozenges, sprays, gargles and cough syrups. There are also products and formulas specifically for children



## Do I need antibiotics?

Antibiotics will **not** relieve the symptoms of most colds, sore throats, earaches or coughs, and do not speed up recovery in adults or children

Antibiotics are powerful medicines and in some cases may do more harm than good. They can cause unpleasant side effects, such as diarrhoea, thrush or skin rash

Antibiotics will only be provided when the likely benefits outweigh the risks. This is not the case for most respiratory tract infections

If you take antibiotics you are at risk of carrying resistant bacteria for up to one year. This resistance may make it harder to treat other infections in the future

## Relief is as easy as 1, 2, 3:

### 1 Assess your symptoms

Provide your healthcare provider with a clear description of your symptoms and concerns. Make them aware of any existing medical conditions

### 2 Beat your symptoms

Ask your pharmacist which products are best for your symptoms. Your pharmacist can also advise on symptoms that require you to see your doctor

### 3 Care for yourself

Drink plenty of fluids, rest and manage your symptoms with the right products to help you feel better fast

**The 1, 2, 3 approach is a useful reminder of helpful self-care advice, suitable for adults and children suffering from symptoms of cold, sore throat, earache or cough**

This leaflet was developed by the Global Respiratory Infection Partnership (GRIP), supported as part of an unrestricted educational grant by RB Group PLC.



## Battling a cold? Fighting flu?



- Cold
- Cough
- Earache
- Flu
- Runny or blocked nose
- Sinusitis
- Sore throat
- Tonsillitis

## How to feel better fast

*A guide for adults and parents of children over two years old*

