

Common Illnesses and How Best to Treat Them

	Sore Throat	Ear Infection	Cough and Cold	Acute Sinusitis	Flu	Paracetamol
	Usually caused by a virus.	An ear infection means the middle ear, the small space behind the eardrum, is infected and is sometimes called 'acute otitis media'.	Most cough and colds are caused by a virus. An average primary school child has 3-8 coughs or colds per year, sometimes several one after another.	Usually caused by a virus and in most cases develops from a cold or flu-like illness. Acute means the infection develops quickly and lasts a short time, most no longer than a week. Sinusitis is an inflammation of the sinuses.	Usually caused by a virus. (remember to have your yearly flu-jab, book an appointment with your GP surgery for this).	Paracetamol (and ibuprofen) should be used mainly for relief of pain and discomfort and is not necessary to reduce fever in an otherwise symptomless patient. Fever is part of the body's defense mechanisms against infection.
Symptoms	Soreness in the throat and you may also have a hoarse voice, mild cough, fever, headache, feel sick, feel tired, painful to swallow and the glands in your neck may swell.	Earache is common but does not always occur. Dulled hearing and or a fever are common. Children may feel sick or vomit.	A cough which is often worse at night. A runny nose, fever, sore throat, tiredness, decreased appetite and mild earache.	Blocked or runny nose (maybe green or yellow), pain (often throbbing) and tiredness over infected sinus, chewing may be painful, fever and you may feel generally unwell.	Fever, sweats, muscle aches, a dry cough, sore throat, sneezing and headache. You may also feel sick.	Dosages Paracetamol can be taken every 4-6 hours up to a <u>maximum of four doses in 24 hours</u> . Consult your doctor or pharmacist if symptoms persist for more than 3 days. Tablets and capsules normally contain 500mg. Adults & children over 16 years – 500mg – 1000mg per dose. Liquid – <u>250mg/5ml for older (6+) children:</u> Age 12-16 years = 10ml to 15ml per dose. Age 10-12 years = 10ml per dose. Age 8-10 years = 7.5ml per dose. Age 6-8 years = 5ml per dose. Liquid – <u>120mg/5ml for children under 6:</u> Age 4-6 years = 10ml per dose. Age 2-4 years = 7.5ml per dose. Age 6-24 months = 5ml per dose. Age 3-6 months = 2.5ml per dose.
Duration	The soreness typically gets worse over 2-3 days and then usually goes within a week. About 1 in 10 lasts longer than a week.	Most earaches will clear up on their own within a few days.	Typically, symptoms are worse in the first 2-3 days and then ease over the next few days. An irritating cough may linger for up to 2 to 4 weeks after the other symptoms have gone.	Symptoms usually go within a week or so.	Symptoms peak after 1-2 days and then usually gradually ease over several days. An irritating cough may persist for a week or so. Most people recover in 1 to 2 weeks.	
Best Treatment	Have plenty of fluids and rest. Paracetamol and ibuprofen can be used to ease pain, headache and fever. Ask your pharmacist for advice on easing symptoms.	Paracetamol and ibuprofen can be used to ease pain and fever. Ask your pharmacist for advice on easing symptoms.	Treatment aims to ease symptoms there is no magic cure. Paracetamol and ibuprofen can be used to ease pain, ear ache and fever. Ask your pharmacist for advice on easing symptoms.	Paracetamol can be used to ease pain and fever. Decongestant nasal sprays or drops are sometimes used. Ask your pharmacist for advice on easing symptoms.	Treatment aims to ease symptoms there is no magic cure. Paracetamol and ibuprofen can be used to ease pain, ear ache and fever. Ask your pharmacist for advice on easing symptoms.	
Notes		If dullness of hearing persists, pain gets worse, a child becomes more ill or does not improve over 2-3 days or have symptoms you are unsure about see a doctor.	If the cold lasts more than 2 weeks, you become breathless or wheezy, are coughing up dark green sputum, have a chest ache or already have a chest complaint see your doctor.	Swelling or redness of an eyelid or cheek in a child with sinusitis should be reported to a doctor urgently. If your symptoms do not improve from the above treatment, then see your own doctor.	You should consult your doctor if you have chest pains, repeated vomiting, a headache that becomes worse, you cough up blood or blood-stained sputum.	