

# CHILDREN AND COUGHS

It's easy to get scared when coughs start to sound through the house more and more. It's easy to see germs flying everywhere, and the entire family going down one by one. Oftentimes, a [sore throat](https://www.thewellnessway.com/6-ways-to-find-natural-sore-throat-relief/) (<https://www.thewellnessway.com/6-ways-to-find-natural-sore-throat-relief/>) or cough is the first sign of a cold, flu, or other sickness taking hold. The good news is that getting a cold means your body is actually doing exactly what it should—fighting back against the pathogens and sickness.

While coughing doesn't sound nice, then, it is important to keep the body working against the infection, virus, or bacteria. Encourage children to keep coughing and loosening up the congestion and getting it out. If a child gets to the point that they're coughing up mucus or phlegm, encourage them to spit it in a waste basket or toilet, not swallow it back down.

When a child starts coughing, there are a few things that can help soothe the cough, and help the body fight that which is causing it.

## 1. STAY HYDRATED

The human body needs a lot of water, and it's very easy to get dehydrated, especially when you're fighting something off. A cough is a sign that's exactly what a child's body is doing, and it's important to give their body the fluids it needs to keep functioning properly, as well as flush the toxins out. It's also important to make sure you're not making [hydration mistakes](https://www.thewellnessway.com/hydration-mistakes/) (<https://www.thewellnessway.com/hydration-mistakes/>), and that the little ones are getting [good, clean water](https://www.thewellnessway.com/whats-in-your-water/) (<https://www.thewellnessway.com/whats-in-your-water/>).

It can be difficult to get kids to drink water after a while, because water is bland and not as fun or interesting as juice. Don't give in and let them have sugary drinks, though. Instead, [infuse their water](https://www.thewellnessway.com/top-10-water-infusions-health-and-hydration/) (<https://www.thewellnessway.com/top-10-water-infusions-health-and-hydration/>) with various fruits, veggies, or berries to give the water a new taste, and help them take in the benefits of those foods, as well. If the little one doesn't want to drink water because it hurts on a prickly throat, try a

warm tea, some carbonated water, or a water glass flavored with stevia. These little tweaks to the water often help it go down easier.

## 2. STOP SUGAR AND DAIRY INTAKE

Cutting sugar intake in general has many benefits (<https://www.thewellnessway.com/benefits-of-giving-up-sugar/>) for various organs and systems in the body. It reduces inflammation (<https://www.thewellnessway.com/hidden-inflammation/>) and starves infections. If a child's body is trying to fight a bug or virus, additional inflammations and infections are going to do more to support the antigens than the body.

Cutting dairy also has many benefits (<https://www.thewellnessway.com/the-benefits-of-giving-up-dairy/>) in everyday life. One thing dairy does is creates more mucus. When a child is sick or has a cough, their body is already producing more mucus. Health Hearty (<https://healthhearty.com/why-is-mucus-produced-when-you-have-cold>) gives this explanation for that:

While our body has a good amount of mucus production on a daily basis, it may increase in the days when one falls sick with cold or hay fever. Let us understand why this happens. ... The airways in the respiratory system get inflamed and the production of mucus is increased. Mucus helps in absorbing the virus and pathogens that have invaded the body. This increase in production of is actually an immunity response of the body.

Another interesting fact is, when the neutrophils and antibodies are fighting the virus, they release enzymes and co-enzymes, which then mix with the mucus in large quantities. This is what gives the greenish color. So the fact is that the sticky fluid that runs when you have a cold

is not the virus itself, but your immune system fighting the virus and pathogens.

Mucus, then, is produced when the airways of the respiratory system get inflamed. This mucus absorbs the virus and pathogens, which is then the mucus that comes out through coughing and snotty noses. Taking in more dairy just gives your body more mucus to expel, resulting in more coughing, and an even fuller nose, and more sneezing.

### 3. TAKE A TABLESPOON OF HONEY

If a little one's cough is dry and hacking, and nothing is coming up, you want to soften and soothe the throat, as well as get the body working to get that mucus coming up. Honey is great to lubricate the throat and help soothe the irritation. As Mayo Clinic (<https://www.mayoclinic.org/drugs-supplements-honey/art-20363819>) says:

In addition to its use as a natural sweetener, honey is used as an anti-inflammatory, antioxidant and antibacterial agent. People commonly use honey orally to treat coughs and topically to treat burns and promote wound healing.

It also says (<https://www.mayoclinic.org/drugs-supplements-honey/art-20363819>):

Studies suggest that eucalyptus honey, citrus honey and labiatae honey can act as a reliable cough suppressant for some people with upper respiratory infections and acute nighttime cough.

Just be careful not to give it to a child younger than a year old, and to always use raw, unfiltered honey. Processed honey has been stripped of many of its beneficial properties.

## 4. SLEEP PROPPED UP

When sleeping, the mucus will follow gravity. When sleeping horizontal, that'll likely be along the back of the throat. Instead, use gravity to your advantage, and prop the child up with a couple pillows so they sleep with their head elevated. Sleeping elevated helps keep the airways open, making it easier for the little one to breathe at night, reducing the need to cough to clear those passageways.

## 5. OPEN UP THE AIRWAYS

Mayo Clinic (<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/high-blood-pressure/in-depth/high-blood-pressure-medication/art-20048154>) defines vasodilators as:

Vasodilators are medications that open (dilate) blood vessels. They affect the muscles in the walls of the arteries and veins, preventing the muscles from tightening and the walls from narrowing.

As a result, blood flows more easily through the vessels. The heart doesn't have to pump as hard, reducing blood pressure.

When a little one has a congested cough, the important thing is to get that congestion out, and the best way to help the body do that is to open the airways.

Things like peppermint, eucalyptus, and tea tree essential oils help with this. Do your research as to which ones are good quality, and diffuse them to open up the airways. Apple cider vinegar is an ingestible vasodilator—though that one may be a hard sell for the kiddos due to the strong smell.

You can make a tea mixing several of these aids together by putting two tablespoons of the apple cider vinegar into a cup of warm water and then adding some lemon and honey until the taste of the

vinegar has diluted enough to be palatable.

Another way to loosen up that congestion is to massage a little one's back with firm pats, sending those steady vibrations through their body to loosen up the mucus so they can cough it out.

Something as simple as steam is a vasodilator, as well. Take the child into the bathroom and let a hot shower run, and then breathe the steam in. It'll open the airways, and they'll be able to breathe better and get that congestion out.

Coughs can be annoying when they don't go away, and scary to hear from a child. They can sound terrible and be overwhelming. The good news is, if the child is coughing, their body is doing its job, and you can help it along. Thankfully, there are ways to do that. To find out more, check out [this video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=34iiSqbk-88) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=34iiSqbk-88>).

Did you know regular chiropractic adjustments [help boost the immune system by 200%](https://www.thewellnessway.com/the-most-powerful-weapon-against-the-flu-boost-your-immune-system-200/) (<https://www.thewellnessway.com/the-most-powerful-weapon-against-the-flu-boost-your-immune-system-200/>)? Guard against coughs and colds in the future—stop into a Wellness Way clinic near you today!