

A B C D E F G Children's Health

Does Your Child Have An Ear Infection? How To Tell

(NAPSA)—Catching a cold or flu is commonly followed by a secondary infection, such as pneumonia, sinusitis and, particularly in children, an ear infection. Although common in young children, many parents don't know the classic symptoms of an ear infection or when to head to the doctor.

Ear infections occur when bacteria cause a buildup of fluid and inflammation in the ear. Other factors that may increase a child's risk of getting an ear infection include some allergies, bottle-feeding in a lying-down position, and breathing tobacco smoke. Three out of four children have an ear infection before the age of three.

Telltale symptoms of ear infections include:

- Evidence of pain—crying, ear tugging or fussiness
- Hearing problems
- Fluid draining from the ear
- Fever
- Dizziness (not very common)

If a child has these symptoms, it is important to see a pediatrician. A child's doctor may recommend that parents watch their child and wait to see if symptoms worsen. Doctors in the meantime may suggest giving children ibuprofen or acetaminophen (never give aspirin products), placing warm compresses over the ear and maintaining a semiupright position to decrease ear pressure.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics' treatment guidelines on ear infections,



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antibiotics may be the right choice for children under the age of two or those whose symptoms linger after two days.

If a doctor has prescribed an antibiotic, the symptoms usually begin to go away within a few days. Even if the child is feeling better, it is important to take the full course of treatment to help prevent antibiotic resistance. To make treatment easier for both you and your children, ask your doctor for an antibiotic that tastes good, has convenient dosing options and does not require refrigeration. Some antibiotics also offer a higher dose level (250mg/5mL), which allows for less medication for parents to administer.

For more information on children's health, ear infections and antibiotics, visit www.berrygoodears.com.