

Help Your Kids Cope With This Year's Respiratory Season

(NAPSA)—Throughout most of the country, the colder months signal the onset of the respiratory season. Respiratory infections are some of the most common illnesses around, affecting more than 200 million Americans each year, more than one-third of them under the age of 18.

Common respiratory infections in children include upper respiratory infections, such as sinus infections, tonsil and throat infections, as well as ear infections. If your child develops a respiratory infection or ear infection, it's important to make sure he or she receives the right treatments, and follows doctor's orders.

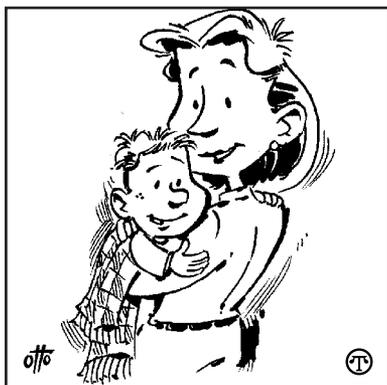
Why Do Kids Get Sick?

Contrary to popular belief, cold weather does not cause respiratory infections. In fact, the reason that kids are more likely to develop a respiratory infection during the winter is because they spend more time indoors—and in the classroom—and therefore are exposed to higher concentrations of germs. (Adults are susceptible for the same reason.) Dry winter weather also dries nasal passages, which increases a child's susceptibility to the germs that cause respiratory infections.

"Unfortunately for children and their parents, respiratory infections cannot be avoided," said W. Manford Gooch, III, M.D., clinical professor of pediatrics, University of Utah School of Medicine. "But managing a respiratory infection quickly and effectively may decrease the number of school days missed each winter."

Managing Respiratory and Ear Infections

While it's important to make sure your kids drink plenty of fluids, eat healthy and get plenty of rest, you also should understand



When antibiotics are prescribed for a respiratory infection, it's important that the child finish the prescription—even if he or she is feeling better.

that sometimes kids do get sick. If you have concerns regarding your child's health, seek advice from your physician. Whereas antibiotics are not effective for respiratory infections caused by a virus, they may be prescribed if a child has a bacterial or ear infection. Antibiotics should be taken for the entire length of time prescribed by the doctor—even if the child feels better.

"When I prescribe an antibiotic for kids, I look for a treatment that is effective, tolerable and convenient," said Dr. Gooch. "One antibiotic I like to prescribe to my patients with ear infections, sinus infections or throat and tonsil infections is Omnicef® (cefdinir). It's well tolerated in children and comes in a great-tasting, strawberry-cream flavor that kids like. And I've found that if kids like the taste, they're more likely to take their medicine without much fuss—which will certainly make their parents happy."

Omnicef® (cefdinir) dosing options include a five-day regimen for children ages six months to 12

years with ear infections and throat and tonsil infections. For sinus infections, a 10-day course is recommended.

Omnicef is indicated in pediatric patients for the treatment of mild-to-moderate ear infections due to *Haemophilus influenzae* (including beta-lactamase-producing strains), *Streptococcus pneumoniae* (penicillin-susceptible strains only), and *Moraxella catarrhalis* (including beta-lactamase-producing strains); and mild-to-moderate throat and tonsil infections due to *Streptococcus pyogenes*. Omnicef is effective in the eradication of *Streptococcus pyogenes* from the oropharynx. Omnicef has not, however, been studied for the prevention of rheumatic fever following *Streptococcus pyogenes* throat and tonsil infection. Only intramuscular penicillin has been demonstrated to be effective in the prevention of rheumatic fever.

Omnicef is well tolerated with the most common adverse events occurring in more than one percent of pediatric patients in clinical trials, including diarrhea (eight percent), rash (three percent) and vomiting (one percent). Omnicef, an extended spectrum cephalosporin, is contraindicated in patients with known allergy to the cephalosporin class of antibiotics. Patients with previous hypersensitivity to penicillin should be closely monitored when taking Omnicef. If an allergic reaction to Omnicef occurs, it should be discontinued. The safety and efficacy of Omnicef in infants less than six months of age have not been established.

For more information, including full prescribing information about Omnicef, log onto www.rxabbott.com/om/omnicef.html.