

Common colds need common sense, not antibiotics



Staff update
2008



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Purpose of this presentation

Refresh your knowledge about:

- when children with colds are infectious
- what cold symptoms are really telling you
- why common colds don't need antibiotics.



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A circular logo with a white border and a blue background. Inside the circle, the text 'common colds need common sense' is written in white, arranged in three lines.

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The National Prescribing Service (NPS)

Accurate, evidence-based information
and services to help people manage
their medicines.

www.nps.org.au



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Activity 1.1 — True or false?

For cold and flu infections:

1. Antibiotics stop these infections spreading to others. (T/F)
2. Antibiotics help you get better faster. (T/F)
3. Antibiotics prevent a cold or flu from getting worse. (T/F)
4. Antibiotics have no effect because cold and flu infections are viral, not bacterial. (T/F)



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Antibiotics don't work for common colds



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Activity 2.1 — Can you guess the side effects?

D.....

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Activity 2.1 — Answer

Can you guess the side effects?

Diarrhoea

Nausea

Allergic reactions

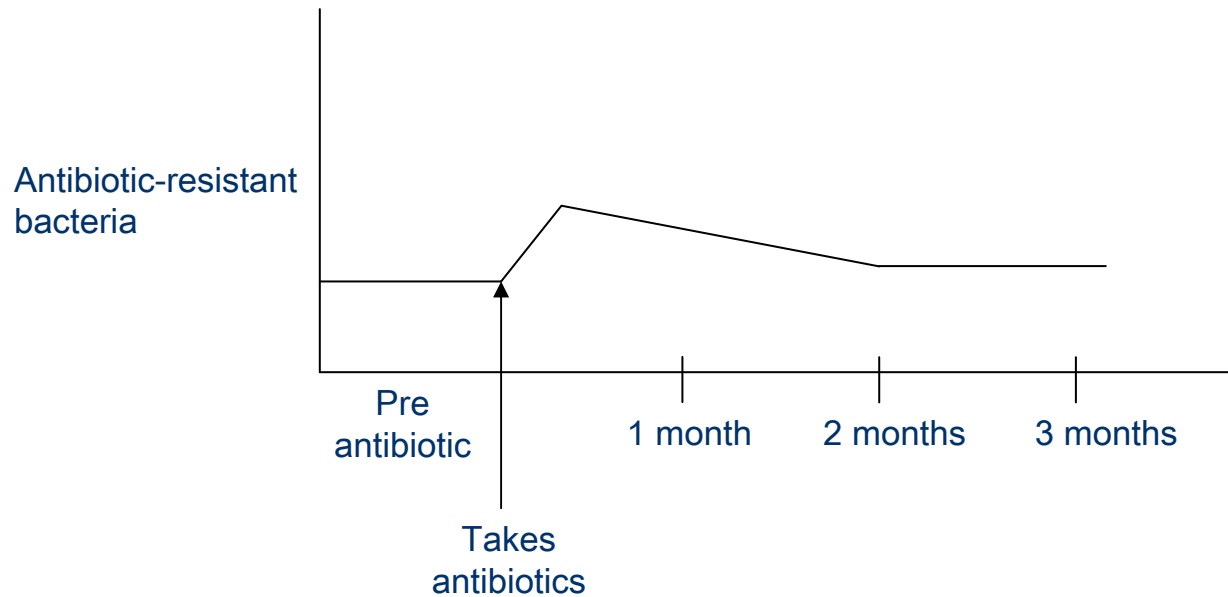
Thrush



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Antibiotic-resistant bacteria



Note: not a scientific graph — for visualisation purposes only.



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The antibiotic time bomb is ticking



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Activity 2.1 — Answers

True or false

For cold and flu infections:

1. Antibiotics stop these infections spreading to others. **False**
2. Antibiotics help you get better faster. **False**
3. Antibiotics prevent a cold or flu from getting worse. **False**
4. Antibiotics have no effect because cold and flu infections are viral, not bacterial. **True**



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Activity 3.1 — Who gets the most colds?

Guess on average how many colds:

- children may get per year
- adults may get per year.



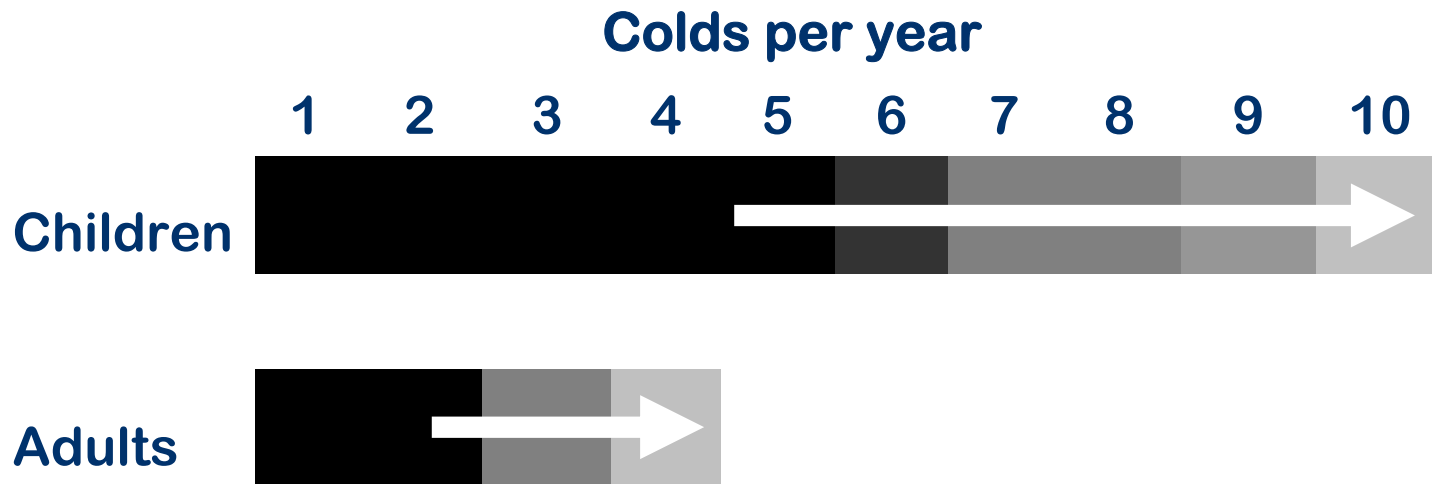
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Activity 3.1 — Answer

Who gets the most colds?

Children get more colds than adults.



Children in child care

Children in child care have more frequent colds than children cared for at home, but this situation is reversed once they get to primary school.



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Children in child care

- The risks of getting a cold increases the more children interact with each other.
- For example, an only child under 2 years who attends a childcare service is 3 times more likely to get a cold than if they were cared for at home.



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Activity 3.2 — When are children with colds infectious?



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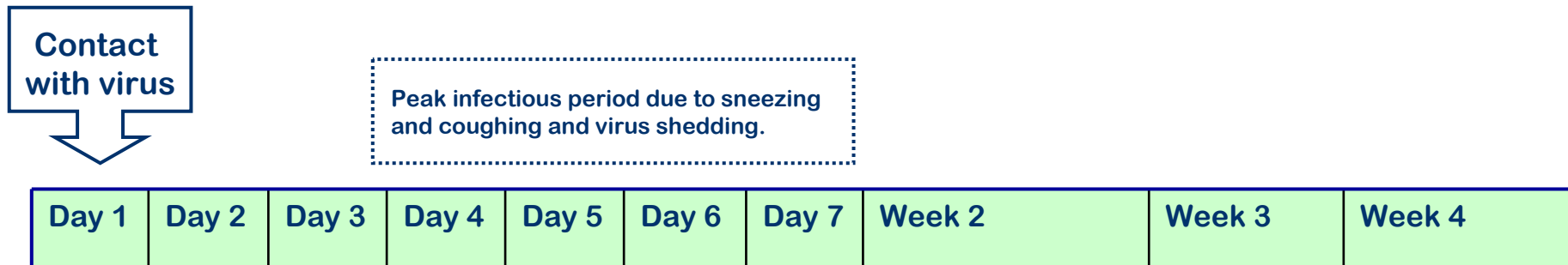
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Activity 3.2 — Answer

When are children with colds infectious?

Potentially infectious period

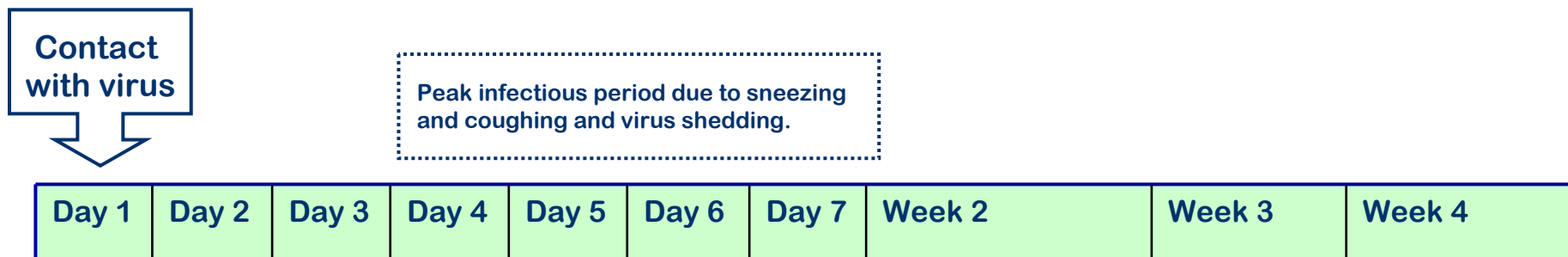


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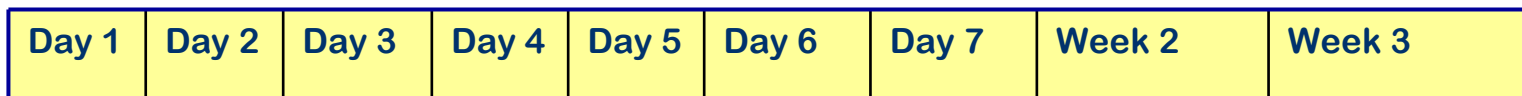
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Common colds timeline

Potentially infectious period



Possible symptoms



Earlier symptoms

Headache, sneezing, chilliness and tiredness

Usually develop and decline within the first 2 days.

Later symptoms

Tiredness, nasal discharge (may be coloured), and nasal obstruction.

Tend to develop slowly over several days.

Most symptoms last about 7-10 days

Cough can last up to 3 weeks





Activity 3.3 — What is a green or yellow runny nose telling you?



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Activity 3.3 — Answer

What is a green or yellow runny nose telling you?

- It means that the child's immune system is fighting the cold.
- The colour change is normal and doesn't mean antibiotics are needed.



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Colds can trigger asthma

What to look out for:

- coughing
- wheezing
- chest tightness
- shortness of breath.



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How colds are spread

- Touching hands or objects such as tissues and toys.
- Breathing in droplets from sneezes and coughs.



Activity 4.1 — NHMRC guide exclusion periods

What do you think the NHMRC
recommendations are for excluding
children with common colds?



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The dilemma of exclusion

Excluding children should be based on:

- how easily infection is spread
- ability of an infected person to follow hygiene procedures
- severity of the disease.



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Activity 4.2 — Handwashing

*Pause on this slide until instruction 10
in the handwashing activity*



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How to wash hands

- Use liquid soap and running water.
- Wash your hands thoroughly while counting slowly from 1 to 10.
- Rinse your hands while slowly counting from 1 to 10.
- Turn off the tap with a paper towel.
- Dry hands well with a new paper towel.



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Activity 4.3 — Reviewing your policies

- Are changes to our policy/ies needed when comparing with the NHMRC guide? If so, what would they be?
- Who will be responsible for reviewing and changing our policies and how can we put these into action in our service?
- How can we better apply our policies to our daily work?

Small group discussion

Take 3 minutes for each question



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Activity 5.1 — Supporting parents and carers

- What information is most vital for parents and carers?
- How best can we use these resources to reach parents?

Group discussion



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**Thank you for your time
and remember ...**

**Common colds need common
sense, not antibiotics.**

**For more information visit
www.nps.org.au/commoncolds**



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