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Knowing what viruses are circulating in your local area might provide some clues as to why your child is ill and what the best thing is for you to do to help them.

Please select your local area from the drop-down menu to find out what viral illnesses are currently circulating:

- Location: Select your local area
- Week: 7 – 11 November 2016
Most frequent **respiratory viral illnesses** in children in your local area in the **week commencing**:

- **Rhinovirus**
- **Respiratory syncytial virus**
- **Influenza A**

Bubble-size relates to number of children identified with the virus. The **darker** the colour, the more likely your child has the **viral illness** and does **not need** to see a **GP**.

Click on the bubbles to find out more about viral symptoms.

(Map copyright: Ian Silva)
Most frequent respiratory viral illnesses in children in your local area in the week commencing:

- **Rhinovirus**
  - This virus is one of the main causes of the common cold. It can last for up to 15 days.
  - Typical symptoms:
    - Runny nose
    - Cough
    - Sore throat
    - Fever / high temperature
    - Ear ache
    - Tiredness
    - Aching muscles
    - Headache
    - Sneezing

- **Influenza A**
  - This is a common flu virus.
  - Typical symptoms:
    - Runny nose
    - Cough
    - Sore throat
    - Fever / high temperature
    - Muscle aches
    - Headaches
    - Tiredness
    - Vomiting & diarrhoea

- **Respiratory syncytial virus**
  - This is a common virus that most children get at some point. Symptoms look like a common cold.
  - Typical symptoms:
    - Runny nose
    - Cough
    - Fever / high temperature
    - Wheezing
    - Not hungry
    - Sneezing

Explanation:
- **Rhinovirus**
- **Respiratory syncytial virus**
- **Influenza A**

Bubble-size relates to number of children identified with the virus. The darker the colour, the more likely your child has the viral illness and does not need to see a GP.

Click on the bubbles to find out more about viral symptoms.
Most viral illnesses will get better by themselves, but this might take longer than you expect.

Below is a list of some viral symptoms and their typical duration.

- Runny nose: 15 days
- Cough: 25 days
- Sore throat: 2-7 days
- Fever: up to 5 days
- Ear ache: 7-8 days
Viral illnesses are **very common** among children. Often children get 6 - 8 each year.

**Antibiotics are not effective** for viral illnesses and in most cases doctors will advise home care for its symptoms.

If your child has any of the **following symptoms**, it is likely that they have a viral illness. Click on the symptoms to find out more.

- Cough
- Sore throat
- Fever / high temperature
- Ear ache
- Tiredness and aching
- Vomiting

Information: NHS (www.nhs.uk/) / Caring for children with coughs (child-cough.bristol.ac.uk/)
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Cough

- Children often cough when they have a viral illness because of mucus trickling down the back of the throat.
- Although it is upsetting to hear your child cough, it helps clear the throat.
- If they are eating, drinking and breathing normally and there is no wheezing, there is usually nothing to worry about.
- Most coughs clear up within 3 weeks and do not require any treatment.
- Noisy chesty coughs are still often caused by viruses.

What you can do to help:
- Drinking lots of water will keep your child hydrated and replaces fluids lost when coughing and sneezing.
- If your child is over 1 year old, try a warm drink of lemon and honey.
- Cough medicines are not safe for children under 6 years and only potentially help to reduce symptoms, but will not help the cough get better faster.
- For more information see: http://child-cough.bristol.ac.uk/
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- Cough
- Sore throat
- Fever
- Earache
- Tiredness and aching
- Vomiting

Common viral illnesses in children
Information and advice for parents and carers

What viruses are going around in your area?
How long will a viral illness last?
What are typical viral symptoms?
What can parents and carers do?
When to take your child to the doctor?

- Your child's throat may be dry and sore.
- This is very common and usually nothing to worry about.
- Most sore throats are caused by minor viral illnesses such as colds or flu and can be treated at home.
- They normally get better within a week.

What you can do to help:
- You can give your child paracetamol or ibuprofen as directed on the medicine packaging.
- Provide little and often cool or warm fluids, and avoid very hot drinks.
- Give your child cool, soft foods.
- Homemade mouthwash of warm, salty water can help.
- Your child can suck lozenges, hard sweets, ice cubes or ice lollies – but don't give them anything small and hard because of the risk of choking.

Information: NHS (www.nhs.uk/) / Caring for children with coughs (child-cough.bristol.ac.uk/)
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Antibiotics are not effective for viral illnesses and in most cases doctors will advise home care for its symptoms.

If your child has any of the following symptoms, it is likely that they have a viral illness. Click on the symptoms to find out more.

- Cough
- Sore throat
- Fever / high temperature

What you can do to help:
- Encourage them to drink plenty of fluids even if they are not thirsty.
- You could help to your child to stay at a comfortable temperature by covering them with a lightweight sheet or opening a window, but they should be appropriately dressed for their surroundings.
- If a fever is making your child uncomfortable, you can give them paracetamol or ibuprofen as directed on the medicine packaging.
Viral illnesses are very common among children. Often children get 6 - 8 each year. Antibiotics are not effective for viral illnesses and in most cases doctors will advise home care for its symptoms. If your child has any of the following symptoms, it is likely that they have a viral illness. Click on the symptoms to find out more.

### Cough

- A baby or toddler may pull or rub at an ear.
- The ear can be red and there might be discharge.
- Other possible symptoms include irritability, crying, difficulty feeding and restlessness at night.
- Most ear ache is caused by viruses and will get better by itself within about 3 days.
- Your child may have a problem hearing for up to 2 to 6 weeks.

### Sore throat

### Fever / high temperature

### Ear ache

- Placing a warm flannel against the affected ear may also help relieve the pain.

**What you can do to help:**

- If your child has ear ache, you can give them paracetamol or ibuprofen as directed on the medicine packaging.
Viral illnesses are very common among children. Often children get 6 - 8 each year. Antibiotics are not effective for viral illnesses and in most cases doctors will advise home care for its symptoms. If your child has any of the following symptoms, it is likely that they have a viral illness. Click on the symptoms to find out more.

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What you can do to help:
- Your child might feel quite tired as the body is looking after itself by resting, so its defence system can fight the illness.
- Children may have some pain or discomfort when they have a viral illness, such as a headache or achy limbs.
- It is not usually a sign of anything serious.

What viruses are going around in your area?
How long will a viral illness last?
What are typical viral symptoms?
What can parents and carers do?
When to take your child to the doctor?
Viral illnesses are **very common** among children. Often children get 6 - 8 each year. **Antibiotics are not effective** for viral illnesses and in most cases doctors will advise **home care** for its symptoms.

If your child has any of the following symptoms, it is likely that they have a viral illness. Click on the symptoms to find out more.

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- Vomiting is a common symptom of many normal childhood illnesses and get better within a few days.
- It is very unlikely that your child will choke.
- Viral illnesses often cause young children to ‘gag’ (especially at night) and this can make them vomit.
- Vomiting may also be caused by an infection in the gut and usually your child will also have diarrhoea.

**What you can do to help:**

- Drinking is the most important thing. Encourage your child to drink little and often, even if it feels like the fluid is not staying down.
- Seek medical advice if you are concerned your child is becoming dehydrated or if vomiting is not improving after two days.

Most viral illnesses will **get better by themselves**.

Antibiotics **are not effective** for viral illnesses and in most cases doctors will advise **home care** for its symptoms.

Most parents **do not consult** a doctor for viral symptoms. Refer to the [When to take your child to the doctor](#) page for further advice.

**Top Tips - What you can do to help your child:**

- Make sure your child gets plenty of rest. Even if sleep is disturbed, rest will help your child recover.
- Ensure your child gets plenty of fluids. This can be challenging – click [here](#) for more advice on getting your child to consume fluids.
- Keep your child comfortable from pain and fevers by giving them paracetamol (e.g., Calpol) or ibuprofen if needed and as directed on the medicine packaging.

**Top Tip – What you can do to help others:**

- Hand washing can help prevent other members of your family to get infected.

**Note:** This information on home management was co-created with parents.

(Caring for children with coughs: [child-cough.bristol.ac.uk/](http://child-cough.bristol.ac.uk/))
Please contact your GP the same day if your child is showing any of the following symptoms:

**Fever / high temperature:**
- Above 38°C in babies younger than 3 months old.
- Above 39°C in babies aged 3 to 6 months old.
- Persistent fever over 38.5°C for 5 days in a row in children older than 6 months.

**Breathing problems:**
- Rapid breathing.
- Working hard to breath, shown by skin being sucked in around the neck, or between or under the ribs.

**Other symptoms:**
- Much paler than usual.
- Very cold hands and feet with a warm body.
- A new rash that does not fade when pushed - Pushing a glass on the rash is a good way to tell if the rash will fade.
- Not waking or always going straight back to sleep.
- Appears confused or disoriented.
- Bright light hurts the eyes.
- Vomiting persisting more than two days.