

Self Treatment of Common Illnesses and Accidents

Back Pain

The best answer is prevention - learn to sit, bend and lift correctly and keep generally fit. If you do have pain, bed rest with regular Analgesics e.g. Paracetamol or Ibuprofen will help. Consult the Doctor if the pain is severe.

Burns

Apply cold water to the affected area immediately and apply a clean dressing. For severe or widespread burns, please go to your nearest A & E department as soon as possible. Please remember that A & E is for accidents and emergencies only.

Colds and Flu

These usually start with a runny nose, temperature, aches and pains. Antibiotics will not help, as these illnesses are viral. Management consists of rest and taking plenty of fluids. Paracetamol taken every 4-6 hours will relieve the worst of the symptoms.

Cot Death - Reducing the risk of,

There is good evidence to suggest that the following measures can reduce the risk of cot death:

- Babies should lie on their back or side but NOT face down.
- Use a cot thermometer - available from the Health Visitors for a small charge. Do not let your baby get too hot.
- A non-smoking household reduces the risk.
- Keep your baby's head uncovered - place your baby in the "feet to feet" position.
- Babies sleeping in a parents bed are at an increased risk.

Diarrhoea and Vomiting

These illnesses are usually self-limiting. Avoid food for 24 hours or until the symptoms ease. Drink plenty of water or Electrolyte solutions (e.g. Dioralyte, Rehidrat and Electrolade, they are available from your chemist). In the case of small children and babies, you may need to telephone for advice if the symptoms persist.

Fevers In Children

Fevers are mostly caused by viruses, especially in toddlers. Keep the child cool, give regular Paracetamol syrup (e.g. Calpol) according to the dosage on the bottle and plenty of drinks. Children often lose their appetite so do not worry about food if they are not interested. Consult the Doctor if the child seems particularly unwell or has not improved within 48 hours.

Head Lice and Worms

Both of these problems are easily dealt with by treatment available from the chemist.

Insect Bites and Stings

- Wasps - Apply vinegar to neutralize the sting as soon as possible

- Bees - Scrape away the sting and apply a little Bicarbonate of Soda solution as soon as possible.
- Generally - keep Antihistamine tablets in the house to use when necessary (particularly if travelling abroad) to relieve irritation and soreness.

Nose Bleeds

Sit in a chair, bend forward slightly and squeeze the nose firmly below the bone for 10 minutes. If symptoms recur, consult the Doctor.

Sore Throats

These are mainly caused by viruses and antibiotics are unlikely to help. Take plenty of fluids and take Paracetamol every 4-6 hours. If symptoms persist, please see your Doctor.

Sunburn

Avoid Exposure to sun and use a good sunscreen with a high protection factor, especially for children. Otherwise treat as burns and drink plenty of fluids.