

COLD, COUGH, SORE THROAT PRIORITIZE NATURAL TREATMENTS

Upper respiratory tract infections (URTIs), including colds, coughs, and sore throats, are very common and mostly viral in origin. Usual medicines don't change how the illness develops and contribute to the healthcare system's carbon footprint (medications account for approximately 1/5 of the healthcare system's carbon footprint¹). Choosing natural treatments offers significant benefits for both patients and the environment.



Children under 4 years old experience 6 to 8 episodes of URTIs per year, while adults have 2 to 4.²

Many available medicines have not proven their efficacy.^{3, 4}

SOME PROVEN NATURAL TREATMENTS

- ✓ **URTI at the initial stage:** warm foot bath with gradually increasing temperature²
- ✓ **Dry cough:** mallow tea²
- ✓ **Cough with mucus:** thyme herbal tea²
- ✓ **Sore throat:** saltwater gargles²
- ✓ **Cough and sore throat:** infusion and/or gargles with honey (not before one year of age), lemon, thyme
- ✓ **Cold:** nose rinses

Ensure sufficient vitamin intake (five fruits and vegetables per day)



BENEFITS FOR THE PATIENT

- ✓ Avoid taking medicines or chemicals whose benefit over natural treatments hasn't really been proven.
- ✓ Enable patients to actively participate in their own treatment, strengthening the patient-doctor relationship.¹
- ✓ Lower cost.



BENEFITS FOR THE PLANET

- ✓ Significant reduction in carbon footprint by decreasing medication consumption.
- ✓ Reduced impact on biodiversity by minimizing the toxic effects of medications on the environment.

THE SUSTAINABLE PRESCRIPTION



Reassure the patient (or parents) by explaining that they will recover from their URTI regardless of the treatment.
Offer simple and effective natural remedies as alternatives to pharmacological treatments.
Explore the experiences and suggestions of your patients.

When to Discuss Natural Treatments for URTIs ?

Whenever a patient presents with uncomplicated symptoms such as cough, sore throat, or a cold. Natural treatments can also be used alongside other treatments, such as paracetamol.

REFERENCES

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3. Smith MB, Feldman W. Over-the-counter cold medications. A critical review of clinical trials between 1950 and 1991. *JAMA* 1993;269(17):2258-63.

4. Lowenstein SR, Parrino TA. Management of the common cold. *Adv Intern Med* 1987;32:207-33.

