

# Purulent Rhinitis



**Education**

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS AND FAMILIES

## What is purulent rhinitis?

Purulent rhinitis is a nose condition caused by allergies, a virus or by bacteria. This condition may occur by itself or with other illnesses.

## What are the possible symptoms?

Your child may have one or more of the following symptoms:

- A stuffy nose and sneezing
- Thick, cloudy, grayish mucus that is present for more than five days
- Repeated throat clearing and noisy mouth breathing
- Cough
- Fever
- Stuffy “nasal” voice

## What is the treatment?

Your child's doctor will talk with you about specific care for your child. Some general guidelines to follow include:

- Drink plenty of fluids
- Give medicine if ordered by your child's doctor
- Use humidifiers or vaporizers as ordered by your child's doctor. (Hot steam vaporizers are not safe. They may burn your child.) Follow the cleaning instructions that came with the machine, so the vaporizer does not grow germs and mold.
- Acetaminophen (Tylenol<sup>®</sup>, Tempra<sup>®</sup>, Panadol<sup>®</sup>) or ibuprofen (Motrin<sup>®</sup>, Pediaprofen<sup>®</sup>, Advil<sup>®</sup>) may be given for fever or pain. Follow the directions on the box carefully or ask your doctor how much medicine to give.
  - Do not give your child more than 5 doses of acetaminophen in a 24-hour period.
  - Do not give acetaminophen to babies less than 3 months of age without a doctor's order.
  - Do not give ibuprofen to babies less than 6 months of age without a doctor's order.

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**In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room right away.**

*This is general information and is not specific medical advice for your child. Always consult your child's doctor or other healthcare provider if you have any questions or concerns about the care or health of your child. A Children's Healthcare of Atlanta pediatric advice nurse is available 24 hours a day at 404.250.kids.*

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**CHILDREN'S HEALTHCARE OF ATLANTA** [www.choa.org](http://www.choa.org) | **404.250.kids**

*Purulent Rhinitis continued*

**When should I call the doctor?**

Call your child's doctor if he:

- Has persistent lethargy or irritability (does not smile or show interest in play for at least a few minutes during a four-hour period)
- Seems dehydrated (dried out):
  - No urine in six to eight hours in an infant younger than 1 year old
  - No urine in more than eight hours in a child older than 1 year old
  - No tears when crying
  - Sunken eyes
  - Dry lips and mouth
- Starts vomiting
- Seems to be uncomfortable even when held
- Seems to be breathing hard
- Develops a rash
- Has a fever lasting more than three days
- Complains of any persistent pain: earache, pain with urination, abdominal pain etc.
- He is an infant less than three months old and a doctor has not yet evaluated his fever
- He is an infant 3-15 months old with a fever higher than 103.5°F (rectally) and a doctor has not yet evaluated his fever

Check with your child's doctor about when to call for a fever if he is an infant or child with chronic medical conditions, including past history of urinary tract infection (UTI).

In addition, call your child's doctor:

- If fever lasts for more than 48 hours after antibiotics have been started
- If your child has problems taking his medicine
- For signs of breathing problems:
  - Fast, shallow breathing
  - Tightness in chest
  - Bluish color to lips and skin
  - Chest retractions (skin pulling in around ribs when breathing)

**Call 911 or your local ambulance service right away if your child:**

- Is working very hard to breathe.
- Has blue lips, skin or nails.
- Has any breathing problem that needs care right away.