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## Treatment of Congestion in your Infant

Children, including young infants, will get approximately 6 to 8 colds per year. Those who attend daycare may get 8 to 10 or more. An infant with an older sibling who attends school may become ill more often. Big brothers or sisters can bring home common childhood illnesses, such as colds, RSV, bronchiolitis, croup, strep throat, and influenza to their younger sibling. Good hand washing and cleansing of toys can help to minimize the risk of spreading the illness.

The following are some basic methods of treatment for the infant too young to take cold medications:

- **Normal saline nasal drops** (such as Ocean Nasal Spray® or Little Noses®) - instill a moderate amount into each nostril followed by bulb syringe suctioning as needed.
- **Cool mist humidifier** – will moisten the air and will help prevent drying of the nose, mouth, and throat. Be sure to change water daily and clean the machine thoroughly to prevent the growth of mold.
- **Elevate the head of your baby's bed** – this may allow the baby to breath more easily. Remember that no pillows should be used in your infant's crib.

If your child appears to be in respiratory distress, go to the emergency room immediately. The following are warning signs of respiratory distress.

- Rapid breathing when at rest (more than 60 breaths or less than 20 breaths per full minute of counting)
- Flaring of the nostrils
- Sinking in of skin/chest around and below the ribs (referred to as retractions)
- Pale or bluish color around the lips or mouth
- Wheezing or grunting