

4

Tips to Manage Your Child's Illness After Being Sent Home

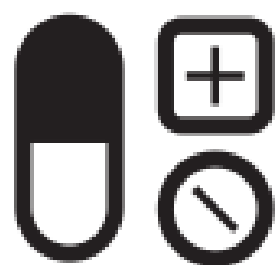
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You've brought your child home from either a visit to the emergency department or physician's office. You have a diagnosis for your child's illness, know what symptoms to expect, and maybe some medication. **Now what?**

In addition to following the advice of your physician, here are **4 tips** to keep you on track in the first several days of managing a common childhood illness.

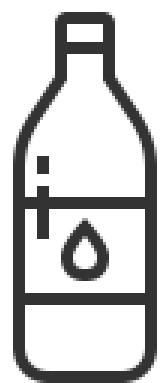
1. Establish a Medication Routine



Over the counter or prescription, you may have been asked by your physician to give your child medication(s) to manage their symptoms. Beyond knowing the dose and how often to give the medication, ensure your routinely taking the child's temperature (if treating fever) or asking them if the medication is effective or causing side effects afterwards. **If a medication is consistently not effective or causing side effects then you should return to your physician or pharmacist for additional advice.**

Also, try to assign one parent to giving medications, to avoid double doses, and have a second adult always check the medication to ensure it is accurate. Because children are very sensitive to medications, it is really important that the **RIGHT AMOUNT** of the **RIGHT DRUG** is being given at the **RIGHT TIME**.

2. Small Sips of Fluids



In the initial days of illness, children tend to have no appetite and may eat little. Though concerning for you as a parent, this is normal and does not necessarily indicate worsening illness. What is troubling to healthcare professionals is their fluid status, as children can become quickly dehydrated when ill.

To encourage fluid consumption, offer them their favourite drinks, Popsicles, and soups in small amounts. Lots of tiny sips are often easier for children than one big drink, so stay patient and keep offering fluids. **If Possible, Avoid Dairy Products** (can increase tummy upset & mucous production).

3. Record Events & Symptoms



Managing a child's illness on top of everything else you have to do as a parent is hectic! To avoid something being forgotten, take time to jot down your child's symptoms, medications given, treatments offered, and any other pieces of information you deem relevant. **Include Date & Time.**

These notes can also be a really helpful means of communication if more than one person is caring for your child, or if you need to seek medical help again (you will need to be able to recount what has happened in detail since your last visit).

4. Don't Be Afraid to Seek Medical Help Again



The Golden Rule of knowing when to return to the emergency department or a physician's office with a sick child is simple: **If Your Concerned, Then So Are Healthcare Staff.**

Safe is **ALWAYS** better than sorry, and you are **NEVER** wasting anyone's time by seeking medical help a second time for a child that is becoming worse or not getting better.

Here are a few symptoms (of many) that should always alert you to seek emergency medical help: loss of bowel or bladder function, limb weakness, loss of sensation, trouble breathing, reduced level of consciousness, profuse sweating, swelling, seizure, and worse/new onset fever, headache, or vomiting.