

# The most common diseases and infections in young children

If you are concerned about your child's condition, contact your local primary health care center.

When the child needs urgent help, call Medical Helpline, tel. 116117.

In case of an emergency, call Emergency number, tel. 112.

## Sources and further information

Duodecim Terveysportti. <https://www.terveysportti.fi>

Terveyskylä. <https://www.terveyskyla.fi>

Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL). Infectious diseases and vaccinations. <https://thl.fi/en/topics/infectious-diseases-and-vaccinations/diseases-and-disease-control>

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## COMMON COLD

### Symptoms:

- runny nose, cough, sneezing, sore throat, fever
- Symptoms usually last for 1-2 weeks.

### Home care instructions:

- Clear a blocked nose regularly, for example using a nasal aspirator.
- Use saline drops or saline spray in the nose.
- For cough, give 2 teaspoons of honey in the evening before bedtime (only for children over 1 year of age).
- Give pain/fever medication if the child is in pain or has a fever.
- Give plenty of fluids.

### Contact health care services if:

- the child has difficulty breathing.
- fever rises above 40°C or lasts more than five days.
- the child is in pain or their overall condition worsens.
- cold symptoms persist for more than two weeks.

High fever may sometimes cause febrile seizures:

- The child's body may stiffen, and their arms and legs may jerk rapidly.
- Breathing may also become difficult.

**If a seizure occurs, call emergency number 112.**



## EAR INFECTION

Often occurs during or after the cold.

### Symptoms:

- Ear pain, loss of appetite, decreased hearing, ear rubbing, restlessness
- Pain often starts at night.

### Home care instructions:

- Give pain relief medication if needed, or use pain-relieving ear drops

**Contact health care services if you suspect your child has an ear infection.**

## EYE INFECTION

Often occurs during the cold.

### Symptoms:

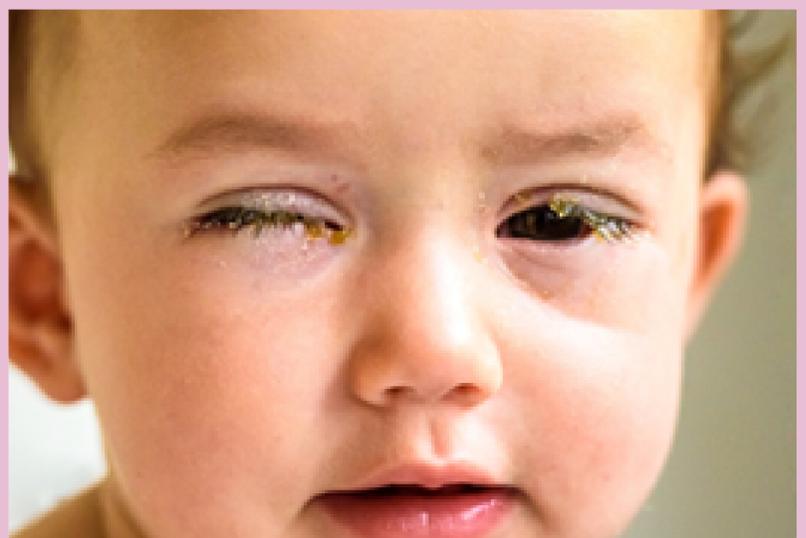
- Redness and discharge from the eye
- Swelling and redness of the eyelids

### Home care instructions:

- Clean the eyes with warm water and a cotton pad.
- Wipe the eye from the outer corner toward the inner corner. Use a new cotton pad for each wipe.

### Contact health care services if:

- symptoms persist for more than 2-3 days.
- the child's eyes are painful.
- the child's vision becomes impaired.



## DIARRHEA AND VOMITING

Spreads easily, remember good hand hygiene!

### Symptoms:

- Along with diarrhea and vomiting, symptoms may include abdominal pain and fever.
- Vomiting typically lasts 1–2 days, but diarrhea can persist for a week.

### Home care instructions:

- Make sure the child drinks enough fluids. In addition to water, offer other drinks such as diluted juice. Give small amounts at a time.
- If the child has severe diarrhea or vomiting, you can offer an oral rehydration solution available from the pharmacy.
- You can give the child probiotics (lactic acid bacteria).

### Contact health care services if:

- the child does not drink enough.
- the child pees less than normally, or there are other signs of dehydration.
- the child has a high fever or severe abdominal pain.
- there is blood in the poop or diarrhea.
- the child is very tired and difficult to wake.
- the child has a long-term illness.



## LARYNGITIS

### Symptoms:

- Hoarseness, squeaky breathing-in sound, barking cough, sometimes fever
- Symptoms usually begin at night when the child is lying down
- The most difficult symptoms typically last 2–3 days

### Home care instructions

- Keep the child in an elevated position.
- Cool, fresh air by an open window or outdoors.
- Give pain and fever medicine if needed.

**Contact health care services if the child has difficulty breathing.**

## IMPETIGO

A bacterial skin infection. Spreads easily.

### Symptoms:

- Blisters, crusts and redness on the skin, usually around the mouth and nose, on the limbs or in skin folds.

### Home care instructions:

- If there are only a few blisters, the symptoms can be treated at home.
- Soften the scabs with water and dry the skin.
- Apply an antibiotic cream from the pharmacy to the skin.

**Contact health care services if the symptoms get worse.**



## ROSEOLA (THREE-DAY FEVER)

An illness that affects children under 2 years old.  
Gets better on its own.

### Symptoms:

- High fever, followed by a red spotty rash.
- Cold-like symptoms.
- Diarrhea.
- Red eyes and swollen eyelids.

### Home care instructions:

- You can give the child medicine for fever and pain.
- Make sure the child drinks enough.



## HAND, FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE

### Symptoms:

- Blisters on the mouth, face and hands, sometimes a rash in the diaper area.
- Fever, cold-like symptoms, sore throat, headache, diarrhea.
- Lasts about one week and gets better on its own.

### Home care instructions:

- Give the child medicine for fever and pain.
- The child's mouth may be sore. Cold and liquid foods make eating easier.

**Contact health care services if the child cannot eat or drink because of pain.**



## CHICKENBOX

Spreads very easily. Gets better on its own.  
May cause serious secondary illnesses.  
The chickenpox vaccine is part of the routine childhood vaccination program.

### Symptoms:

- Itchy skin bumps that turn into blisters.
- Fever.
- The symptoms last about one week.

### Home care instructions:

- Pain and fever medicine if needed.
- An anti-itch cream from the pharmacy can help with the itching.

### Contact health care services if:

- the child has a high fever (over 40°C).
- the child has strong pain.



## HEAD LICE

Head lice live on the scalp and in the hair.  
2-4 millimetres in size.  
Their eggs (nits) look like dandruff.

### Symptoms:

- Itching of the scalp, sometimes with small red bumps.
- Can also be without any symptoms.

### Home care instructions:

- Lice and nits are removed from the hair and scalp using a lice comb, which is available from the pharmacy.
- Wash hair and scalp with a lice shampoo available from the pharmacy. Repeat the washing after one week.
- Clean the home, change and wash bedding and towels.
- Clothing and bedding can be disinfected by keeping them in hot conditions above 80°C for more than two hours. You can also disinfect them by putting them in the freezer overnight.
- Hats, combs, and hairbrushes should be washed.



## PINWORMS

Pinworms live in the intestines.  
About 1 centimeter long, pale worms.  
Common in children and spread easily.

### Symptoms:

- Itching around the anus, sometimes with a rash on the buttocks.
- Pale worms, about 1 centimeter long, may be visible on the surface of the poop.

### Home care instructions:

- Treat the whole family at the same time with medicine available from the pharmacy. Repeat the treatment after two weeks.
- Clean bedding and towels, change to fresh ones. Clean the home.
- Disinfect toys by keeping them in hot conditions above 80°C for more than two hours. You can also disinfect them by putting them in the freezer overnight.
- Keep nails short.