

# Management of Common Ailments

Many conditions get better on their own and can be treated successfully at home. Your pharmacist may be able to help you with these and advise about medicines you can buy over the counter.

## Diarrhoea and Vomiting

In adults and older children, diarrhoea and vomiting will usually get better on their own. Treatment consists of replacing fluid you have lost and resting the digestive system by having nothing solid to eat for 24 hours.

Plain water in small quantities should be taken frequently. If the diarrhoea contains blood or there is severe pain or high fever, you should discuss it with your Doctor.

Diarrhoea and vomiting in small babies and young children should be treated with caution and the Doctor will be happy to advise you about this over the phone and arrange to see you, if necessary. Elderly people and those with medical conditions (eg: diabetes) should consult a Doctor.

## Colds and Flu

These usually start with a runny nose, raised temperature and aches. They are caused by viruses and antibiotics are of no use in their treatment.

Treatment consists of taking recommended doses of paracetamol for the temperature and aches and drinking plenty of fluids. Do not worry if you do not eat for a few days, you will come to no harm.

## Backache and Strains

Many acute strains and backache will respond to a few days rest and paracetamol taken for the pain. If the symptoms continue, you should consult the Doctor.

## Stomach Ache

Most attacks are not serious and are usually caused by dietary indiscretion, indigestion or wind. In the case of indigestion, a teaspoon of antacid such as Milk of Magnesia will help. If the pain becomes increasingly severe you should consult your Doctor.

## Nose Bleeds

Sit in a chair (leaning forward with your mouth open), pinch your nose just below the bone for about ten minutes, by which time the bleeding usually stops. If the bleeding continues, consult your Doctor.

## Sprain

First apply a cold compress containing ice (eg: a bag of frozen peas) for fifteen to thirty minutes to reduce the swelling. Apply a firm crepe bandage and give a sprain plenty of rest until discomfort has subsided.

## Insect Bites and Stings

Most of these need no treatment. Anti-histamine tablets can be obtained from the Chemist without prescription and will relieve most symptoms within a few days.

## Headlice

Headlice may affect anyone and are not a sign of bad hygiene. Special lotions can be obtained from the Chemist without prescription. 'Nits' can be removed using an ordinary conditioner and a 'nit' comb.