

# Skeehchooash

Pequot for Grasses, Herbs, Medicines

PEQUOT PHARMACEUTICAL NETWORK • PHARMACY NEWSLETTER

September 2024

## What Supplements Can Kids Take for Cough & Cold?

Many OTC cough and cold medicines commonly used by adults aren't recommended for children under the age of 6 years old. Most supplements are evaluated for safety and effectiveness in adults, not kids. But kids are still getting sick – so, what can they use?

### WORTH TRYING

The most popular ingredient in "natural" cough and cold products for kids is **honey**. Research shows that taking 0.5-2 teaspoons of honey at bedtime can reduce coughing and improve sleep in kids 2 years and older with a cold. It's also at least as effective as common OTC cough suppressants like dextromethorphan (Delsym).

Parents **should NOT give honey to infants under 12 months** – doing so puts the child at risk for botulism poisoning.



There are also several nonpharmacologic strategies that can also benefit kids.

When **done properly**, **nasal irrigation** can safely improve symptoms of colds and allergies in children. Using **humidifiers** can also help.

For many kids, drinking lots of fluids and eating soup might be all they need to get over a cold.



### CONSIDER AVOIDING

**Elderberry** is a popular ingredient commonly used for cold and flu symptoms. Taking elderberry extract might shorten the duration of cold and flu symptoms in kids over 12. But keep in mind that many products don't contain enough elderberry extract to have the benefits seen in clinical research, and safety in children under 12 isn't clear.

**Camphor** is FDA-approved as a chest rub for cough in adults. While it's safe and effective to use topically for cough in adults, camphor is actually POSSIBLY UNSAFE for kids. Kids are more prone to its side effects even when a small amount is absorbed through the skin.



**Vitamin C** and **zinc** supplements are also very common. While these supplements may shorten colds or improve coughs adults, high doses are typically used. These high doses might not be safe for children and may increase side effects. The risk probably outweighs any benefit.

**Echinacea** is also very popular in cold supplements. While it might benefit adults, it actually doesn't seem to benefit kids. It can also cause an allergic skin rash in some children.

Source: [Natural Medicines](#)

The information in this brief report is intended for informational purposes only, and is meant to help users better understand health concerns. This information should not be interpreted as specific medical advice. Users should consult with a qualified healthcare provider for specific questions regarding therapies, diagnosis and/or health conditions, prior to making therapeutic decisions.

At Pequot Health Care, we are dedicated to maintaining your good health!

 **PEQUOT PRxN**  
PHARMACEUTICAL NETWORK

 **PEQUOT PLUS**  
HEALTH BENEFIT SERVICES

PRxN®  
Customer Service  
800-342-5779

PRxN® PBM  
Customer Service  
888-779-6638

Website  
[www.prxn.com](http://www.prxn.com)

E-Mail  
[pharmacy@mptn.org](mailto:pharmacy@mptn.org)

 **PEQUOT**  
HEALTH CARE

1 Annie George Drive  
Mashantucket,  
CT 06338



Mashantucket Pequot  
Tribal Nation