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## Banning Pediatric Cold And Cough Medicines

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### An End to Bad Drugs

The FDA may finally take action against the harmful, useless, and sometimes deadly decongestants and antihistamines commonly given to children. FDA safety experts have urged a ban on over-the-counter, multisymptom cough and cold medicines for children under 6. The FDA experts have recommended removal of these cough and cold formulas from the market, despite the protests of powerful industry trade groups. About 800 of these formulas are marketed for pediatric use. Clinical studies have shown that these medicines are ineffective. The report issued on September 28, 2007 reports that at least 54 children died after taking decongestants and 69 children died after taking antihistamines. The panel suggested that these figures underestimate the number of deaths because of voluntary reporting guidelines. The FDA has also ordered drug makers to remove all prescription cough medicines for children containing hydrocodone, a narcotic, from pharmacy shelves. None of these products have been shown to be effective, and they are certainly not safe.

### Holistic Treatment

By contrast, holistic pediatric medicine offers many safe and effective treatments for colds, coughs, and flus in children. Both Chinese and western herbal medicine provide excellent pediatric formulas. The most prominent of these are the Chinese herbal pediatric cold and cough formulas developed by Chinese Modular Solutions (Windbreaker, Chest Relief) and Blue Poppy (CQ Junior, Lung Qi Junior, and Bupleurum and Angelica). Golden Flower produces an excellent pediatric ear infection formula as well (Children's Ear Formula). These are available to any health care practitioner.

Black elderberry extract (Sambucol) is an excellent western pediatric formula for viral illness, which has proven to be effective in flu treatment. Echinacea and golden seal are effective in building the immune response to colds, despite contradictory clinical studies. Other Western products, like Emergen-C, and Airborne (a modern version of the Chinese formula yin chiao jin) are also helpful first-line treatments for children's colds.

Homeopathic medicine provides safe and quick acting treatment for children's colds, though most prescriptions need to be individualized to the patient's condition. I do not recommend homeopathic combination medicines. Single homeopathic medicines are more effective, more precise, and safer. Giving a 6, 12, or 30 strength will usually be equally effective. In the absence of specific characterizing symptoms (such as sore throat or cough) a guideline to follow for colds is:

**Stage 1 of the cold: Allium cepa:** The first remedy to give for clear, runny nose.  
or  
**Belladonna:** If there is also a fever with clear runny nose. Once the discharge has changed from clear to yellow or green these remedies are no longer indicated.

**Stage 2 of the cold: Pulsatilla:** thick nasal discharge and clingy behavior.

**Stage 3 of the cold: Kali bichromicum:** thick green nasal discharge.

Archived columns by Randall Neustaedter O.M.D.

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