

# Virus Action Plan (adult)



Patient name \_\_\_\_\_

You have an infection of the ear, nose, throat, sinuses and/or chest, most likely caused by a virus.  
**You may be sick for up to 10 days. A cough may last up to 4 weeks.**

## Antibiotics don't work on a virus, and will not make you feel better any faster.

Taking antibiotics can cause side effects that make you feel worse. Taking antibiotics when they are not needed might cause them to not work in the future.

## Treating your symptoms

You need lots of rest and sleep when you have a virus. Do not do strenuous exercise. Drink plenty of fluid, water is best.

When taking medicine, always follow the instructions, or the advice from a doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

| YOUR SYMPTOMS   | TREATMENT (suitable options ticked)  |
|---|--|
| Fever.<br>Aches and pains,<br>including muscle pain,<br>sore ears, sinus<br>and face pain.<br>Sore throat | Paracetamol<br>Ibuprofen<br>You can use one of these medicines, or use both paracetamol and ibuprofen at the same time.<br>For fever, use a cool cloth to wash your face, hands and neck.<br>Wear lightweight clothing, and use fewer blankets   |
| Sore or dry throat.<br>Cough  | As well as paracetamol and ibuprofen, you could try:<br>Throat gargle or throat spray<br>Lozenges<br>Cough liquid<br>A salt-water gargle for 30 seconds, several times a day (use half a teaspoon of salt stirred into a cup of water)<br>Sucking on ice cubes<br>Drinking warm honey and lemon drinks |
| Blocked or runny nose   | Saline nasal spray or drops<br>Decongestant tablet, liquid, nasal spray or drops<br>Vapour rub such as Vicks (rub onto your chest or back, do not put it on your face)   |
| Other   | Rongoā<br>_____  |

## Follow up

Call your health provider \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_  
or Healthline on 0800 611 116 if:

- Your symptoms are not improved in \_\_\_\_\_ days/hours
- New symptoms occur
- You have other concerns
- An underlying medical condition such as diabetes, asthma, or COPD gets worse

**Please book a follow-up appointment for \_\_\_\_\_ days/weeks**



## Urgent advice

**Call your health provider urgently, or an ambulance (dial 111), if you have any of these symptoms:**

- It is hard or painful to breathe or talk
- Lips or tongue turn bluish
- Coughing up blood
- Confusion or struggling to wake up
- Chest pain
- Severe shaking, chills
- Clammy skin
- A very high fever (over 40°C)
- A severe headache or neck pain, lights hurting your eyes
- Rash with purple or red spots or bruises
- Not peeing, or dark coloured pee
- Feeling faint or passing out (fainting)

## You can find other information on the Health Navigator website

Go to [healthnavigator.org.nz](https://healthnavigator.org.nz) and search for:

- Cough
- Sore throat
- COVID-19
- Influenza

Or ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist to print the information for you.

Or call Healthline 0800 611 116.



## What you can do to help prevent the spread of infection

- Stay home from work or school.
- Wash your hands often, especially after blowing your nose.
- Cover your mouth when sneezing or coughing.
- If you are able to, wear a mask when you go out.

Note for clinicians: This resource will soon be available in multiple languages from [akohiringa.co.nz/virus-action-plans](https://akohiringa.co.nz/virus-action-plans)