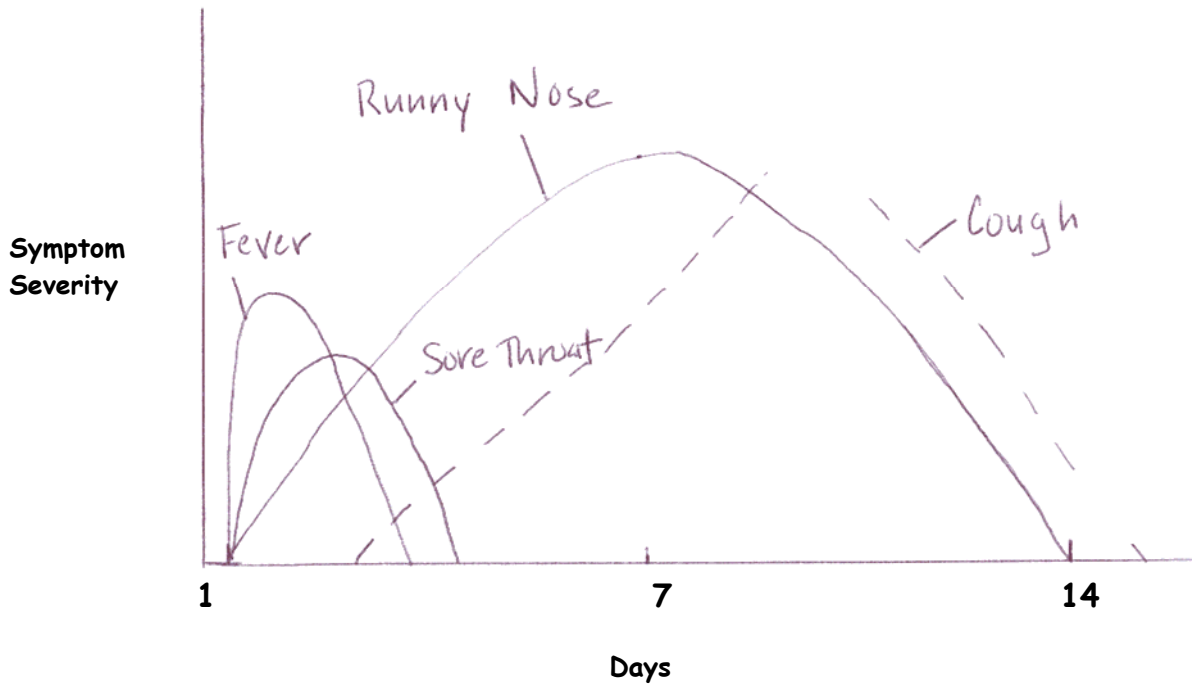


## THE COMMON COLD



Management of colds is helped by understanding the usual course of the common cold.

A cold lasts 10-14 days in children and adolescents. As shown in this diagram, fever occurs during the first few days; a sore throat peaks about day 2-3. A runny nose usually lasts 10-14 days with a peak about day 7, and coughs start a few days into a cold and can last 2-3 weeks. The mucus usually starts out as clear and thin and turns thick and yellow or green in color. As the cold resolves, the mucus becomes thin and clear again.

The goal of treatment is to feel better, not to lessen or eliminate symptoms. Given this goal, we recommend a cool mist humidifier in the room, nasal saline spray with suctioning in young children, and plenty of fluids. Tylenol (Acetaminaphen) or Advil/Motrin (Ibuprofen) can reduce fever and the achy feeling associated with a cold. Benadryl (Diphenhydramine) at bedtime decreases the runny nose and can make the child sleepy. Cold and cough medications are not very effective and they have side effects that can be troublesome. We do not routinely recommend these medications. It is okay to give Tylenol or Advil/Motrin and Benadryl at the same time as they are different medications. Avoid giving medications with more than one ingredient.