

Care of Children with Neuromuscular Disease during a Cold

During a cold, children with muscle weakness can have a very hard time clearing mucus from their lower airway. **You can help them by following these steps:**

1. **These steps should be done in the order shown** below every four hours and as needed while the child has a cold.
 - a. Chest physiotherapy for 10-20 minutes
 - b. Cough machine, four sets of 5 breaths
 - c. Postural drainage for 15-30 minutes
 - d. Cough machine, four sets of 5 breaths
2. Use the cough machine every time your child sounds rattley or has trouble coughing out secretions. You cannot use this machine too much. If your child cannot get mucus out of the back of their throat, suction their mouth.
3. If your child is on BiPAP, use the BiPAP machine with a nasal mask every time they are asleep. Also use it if your child is napping during the day. Your child is weaker than usual during colds.
4. Use the oximeter to check your child's oxygen saturations once per day when well and three times per day when sick. If the oxygen saturation is less than 94%, use the cough machine to clear secretions and recheck the oximetry. If the oxygen saturation is 92% or less and the cough machine is not increasing the oxygen saturation, please **call** the Pediatric Pulmonary Clinic **608-263-8555**. Your child may need to be in the hospital for more intense therapy.

If your child is vomiting, they may become dehydrated. This can be very serious for children with neuromuscular weakness. Please call the Pediatric Pulmonary Clinic **608-263-8555**.