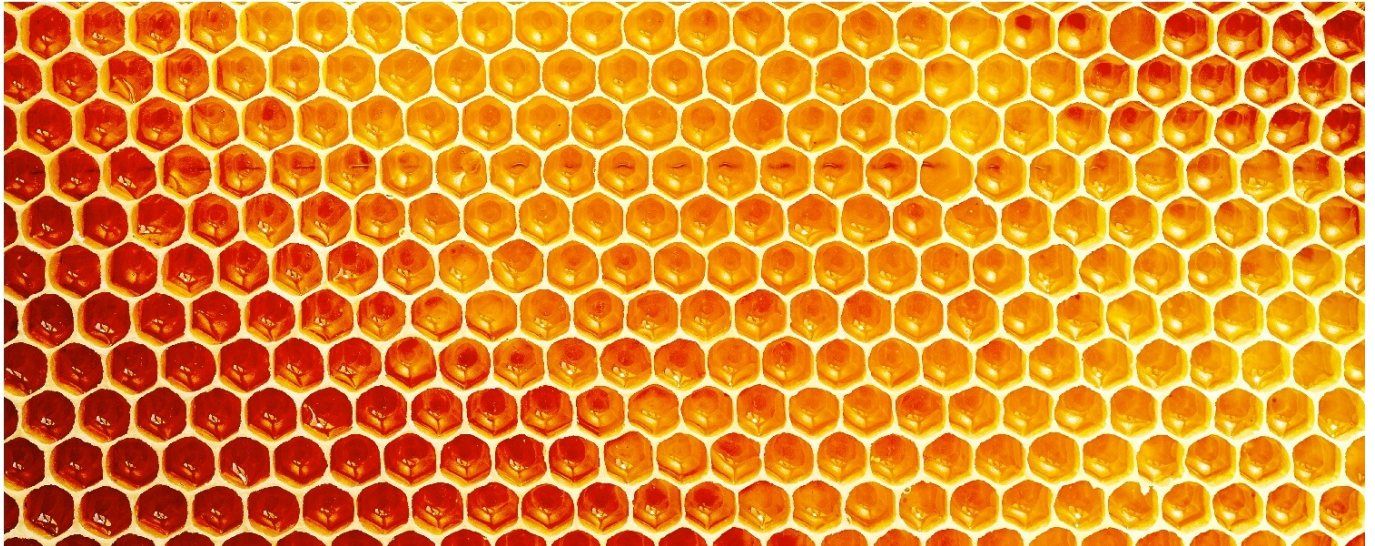


# Honey for URTIs

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## Honey provides symptomatic relief in upper respiratory tract infections

Recent evidence indicates that honey might be more effective and safer in relieving symptoms of upper respiratory tract infections (URTIs), particularly cough frequency and cough severity, than commonly prescribed treatments ([1]).

A systematic review and meta-analysis including 14 clinical trials involving more than 1700 participants compared usual care against honey or preparations with honey as an ingredient. Usual care included antihistamines, expectorants, cough suppressants and painkillers ([1]).

Current guidelines already recommend honey for acute cough in children ([2]). This latest meta-analysis adds evidence for the use of honey in other populations and other URTIs. Honey is a frequently used remedy that is cheap, accessible, familiar to patients and safe, except in those with allergy.

Effectiveness between different types and doses of honey was not able to be assessed due to lack of data. A study in children found that 5 days of treatment with the following daily dosages of honey was more effective than salbutamol and placebo: 7.5 mL (age 1 - 2 years), 15 mL (2 - 6 years) and 22.5 mL (6 - 12 years) ([3]). In adults, 20.8 g of honey every 8 hours for one week was more effective than usual care for persistent post-infectious cough ([4]).

Antibiotics are frequently prescribed for URTIs, however, the majority of URTIs are viral, therefore antibiotic prescription is both ineffective and inappropriate ([5],[6]). Prescribing honey for URTI symptom management might help to reduce inappropriate antibiotic use.

## References

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