

Newsletter Thuisarts



Thuisarts Newsletter – from your GP practice

Dinsdag 03 maart 2026

Spring is almost here. You may be looking forward to it. Many people feel a bit tired at the end of winter. Or they catch colds more easily.

In this newsletter you will find 2 simple tips to help if you have a cold. You will also get advice on how to unblock a clogged ear.

And what do you think: is it good to shower every day?

Enjoy reading.

General Practice Stroomz De Ring International

Please note: The information on Thuisarts.nl is in Dutch. You can easily translate the page into English by right clicking anywhere on the website and selecting "Translate to English" in your browser.



2 simple tips to help if you have a cold

A runny or blocked nose, coughing and a sore throat. Annoying, but a cold will go away on its own.

If your symptoms are bothersome, you can try the following:

- **Hold your face over a bowl of hot water.** Breathe in the steam slowly. For example, do this 3 times a day for 15 minutes. Be careful not to burn yourself on the hot water or steam.
- **Dissolve 1 teaspoon of salt in a glass of lukewarm water.** Put a few drops into each nostril a few times a day.

You can also buy a saline spray or drops at the drugstore or pharmacy.

[Read more about how to ease your symptoms when you have a cold.](#)



A cold or hay fever? This is the difference

Many people have a blocked nose at this time of year. You may wonder: do I have a cold? Or is it hay fever?

Hay fever is starting earlier each year. From February onwards, trees already release pollen. Between now and May, people often have the most trouble with hay fever.



These 3 symptoms are typical of hay fever and usually not of a cold:

- Your eyes are watery and itchy.
- Your nose itches and is full of mucus or fluid.
- You sneeze a lot.

[Read what you can do if you have hay fever.](#)



[Or watch the video about hay fever.](#)



Blocked ear: let water run into it

A blocked feeling in your ear. Or not hearing as well. This is often caused by earwax: a fatty, dark yellow substance in the ear. Fortunately, you can often unblock your ear yourself.

Are you not having a cold? And do you have no pain? Spray or drip warm water into your ear. For example, with the shower head:

1. Tilt your head, with your blocked ear facing up.
2. Spray warm water into your ear with the shower head.
3. Hold your head upright again. The water will run out.
4. Do this once a day for 5 days.

These tips will soften the plug in your ear, making it easier to come out.

[More advice that helps with a blocked ear.](#)



True or false: to keep your skin healthy, you should shower every day

This is not true. Your skin can actually become dry if you shower every day, especially in winter. So try not to shower more than once a day. It is even better to shower less often. Preferably less often. Keep showers short: no longer than 5 to 10 minutes. And don't shower too hot: use lukewarm or warm water.



[Do you have dry skin? These tips can help too.](#)



"My child has chickenpox. Do I always need to call the GP?"

No, usually you do not need to call the GP. You can often take good care of your child yourself. For example, by applying zinc lotion, menthol gel or carbomer gel to the spots, blisters and scabs. You can buy these products at the pharmacy without a prescription.

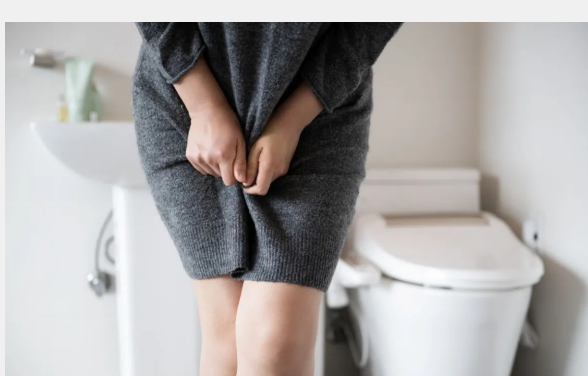
Do you notice one or more of the following? Then call your GP or the out-of-hours GP service immediately:

- Your child has a fever and is younger than 3 months.
- Your child is older than 11 years.
- You notice that your child is getting more seriously ill. For example: your child keeps vomiting, drinks very little, has difficulty breathing, or develops a fever again.

[Read how to recognise chickenpox in your child.](#)



What does high blood pressure mean?



Wait and see or take tablets for a bladder infection?

Women with a bladder infection do not always need tablets. In half of women, the infection goes away on its own within 1 week.

So if your symptoms are mild or have only just started, you can wait for 1 week. If you have pain, you can take paracetamol.

When to call?

Has your bladder infection not cleared up within 1 week? Do you develop a fever or pain in your side? Then call the GP practice. You may be given medication for bacterial infections (antibiotics).

You may also be given a prescription to take with you, but not start immediately. If the symptoms continue or get worse, you can collect the tablets from the pharmacy and start taking them.

Men and children

Men and children under 12 years old should always start medication the same day if they have a bladder infection.

[Read more about treatments for bladder infections.](#)



How to know for sure if your wrist is broken

You have a bad fall and hear your wrist crack. Many people immediately think: my wrist must be broken. But that is not always the case. Your wrist may also be bruised or sprained.

With a broken wrist, you may notice for example:

- You have severe pain in your wrist or forearm.
- You can no longer use your hand and wrist.
- Your wrist is swollen and sometimes looks crooked.

Call your GP or the out-of-hours GP service immediately. They can refer you to the hospital. There, X-rays or a scan will be taken of your wrist. The doctor can then see whether your wrist is actually broken.

[These things are also important if you think your wrist is broken.](#)



