

## Una tosse da paura

**Che cosa fare quando il bambino tossisce? Quali attenzioni, precauzioni e medicine? Di Patrizia Beacci, pediatra**



Il naso purifica l'aria che il bambino respira, ma in certi periodi dell'anno è così costipato da non poter più svolgere questa funzione. **Dal naso chiuso alla tosse** il passo è brevissimo.

La superficie respiratoria misura svariati metri quadrati, immaginiamo che sia un bel prato erboso battuto dal vento: le ciglia vibratili spingono quanto di nocivo arriva con la respirazione verso l'esterno, inoltre la superficie delle vie aeree è ricoperta da un sottile strato di muco, una sorta di calamita, indispensabile per la difesa di tutto l'apparato.

**Polvere, batteri, virus, fumo**, sono potenziali nemici della buona funzionalità respiratoria, infatti l'aria viene espulsa in modo forzato dai polmoni nel tentativo di allontanare l'agente nocivo: **la tosse**.

## Le cause della tosse

Batteri ma soprattutto virus alterano il muco, che diviene tenace ed abbondante, ottimo terreno di coltura per i germi. Talvolta l'infezione si estende fino agli alveoli polmonari che si riempiono di secrezioni tanto da non poter svolgere più la loro funzione, l'ossigenazione del sangue. Altre volte l'infiammazione della parete bronchiale altera il flusso tanto che l'aria passando produce un **tipico fischio** ed il bimbo deve compiere uno sforzo respiratorio maggiore.

Anche le sostanze chimiche come il fumo di tabacco o biologiche come i pollini possono alterare la superficie dei bronchi.

## Cosa fare?

- Osservare il bambino, individuare i sintomi associati alla tosse, febbre, vomito.
- Capire che tipo di tosse, con fischio, secca, profonda, catarrale.
- Da quanto tempo persiste.
- Quanto disturba il bambino.

## Quali medicine per la tosse?

- Gli **antibiotici** ostacolano la replicazione batterica, non hanno alcun effetto contro i virus che sono i maggiori responsabili della tosse
- L'**areosol** nebulizza soluzione fisiologica talvolta insieme a farmaci. L'acqua arriva nelle vie aeree e rende il muco più fluido e facile da espellere, il bimbo tossisce meglio ma non è detto con meno fastidio.
- I **mucolitici** non sono usati nei bimbi piccoli e di discussa efficacia. Dovrebbero fluidificare il catarro che i bambini raramente espellono, in genere lo inghiottiscono o lo vomitano .
- I **sedativi della tosse**, non usati nei bambini piccoli, sono calmanti della tosse.

## Per concludere

La tosse è un **meccanismo di difesa importantissimo**. Senza lo stimolo della tosse il nostro apparato respiratorio sarebbe compromesso tanto da non permettere la vita, siamo sicuri che la prima cosa da fare sia sempre calmare a tutti i costi la tosse?

O piuttosto **allontanare il bambino dalla comunità** perché non contagi gli altri e possa **riposare**, idratarlo, **areare** gli ambienti, non fumare e prendersi il tempo necessario per capire cosa sta accadendo e decidere con il medico la strategia migliore.

Segui la rubrica della dottoressa Patrizia Beacci **La parola al pediatra** sulla nostra rivista [Nidi d'infanzia](#).



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