



## Coughing can be good for you!

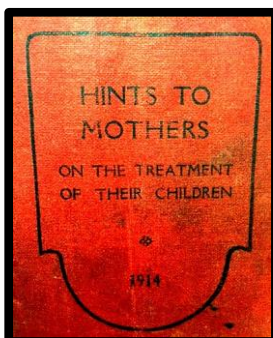
This might seem a strange statement to make as coughing often makes us or our children feel uncomfortable as well as affecting those around them. It can keep us all awake and generally make life feel pretty miserable. However coughing is usually there and happening for a very good reason! Almost all coughs are due to upper respiratory infections (common colds caused by common viruses). During these viral infections (which antibiotics will **not** cure) horrible sticky mucus can form throughout your respiratory tree (nose, throat and deep into your lungs) and that's really not nice. If this mucus stayed there it will attract bacteria who would enjoy themselves in the lovely warm sticky environment and reproduce quickly making loads more mucus and causing inflammation. Fortunately we have a marvellous built in way to get rid of the horrible sticky mucus before it gets loaded with bacteria. This process is called "coughing". Coughing brings the mucus up and out of the lungs and respiratory tract and is usually swallowed which renders it completely harmless as it cannot survive in your stomach. Coughing also agitates mucus preventing bacteria from developing their defensive biofilm and creating a huge colony of pus-filled goo!

In summary coughing is good. It's there for a reason. If we had a medicine that would completely stop coughing, it would kill people as they would end up full of infected mucus and if they couldn't cough it up they would die. There's no more effective way in modern medicine to remove this horrid mucus compared to the simple cough. So just remember when you or your child is coughing, just think about the great job it's likely to be doing and it commonly lasts for a few weeks!

*Based on an article by: The Paediatric Insider ©2017 Roy Benaroch, MD*

**The next meeting of the Patient Participation Group will take place at 6.30pm on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2017 at the Great Bentley Village Hall.**

**Richard P Miller – Practice Manager**



This part of our newsletter publishes suggestions from this 102 year old book called "**Hints to Mothers**" on the health and wellbeing of children prior to the NHS existing. We hope you find this interesting and in many instances still useful even today. ***Please bear in mind this was written a long time ago!***

**Ringworm** – As this is a very contagious complaint, great care should be taken to use separate towels, etc., for the patient, who should also sleep alone. And the bed clothes should be washed with a disinfectant. Was the place affected with iodine or a solution of sulphurous acid. Keep it as clean as possible, and apply a weak ointment of oleate of mercury. If the child is out of health, feed him up well, and give him an emulsion of cod-liver oil.

**Thank goodness for modern science and medicine! Can you imagine treating ringworm now with a dangerous acid and a poisonous mercury based ointment! Fortunately these days you can easily and cheaply get some anti-fungal cream from your pharmacist.**