Hiccups Treatment

Self-Care at Home

Numerous home remedies for hiccups exist. The reason that these remedies are thought to work is that carbon dioxide build-up in the blood will stop hiccups. This is what happens when you hold your breath. If the vagus nerve that runs from the brain to the stomach is stimulated, hiccups can also be alleviated. This is what happens when you drink water or pull on your tongue.

Try these methods at home:

- Hold your breath.
- Drink a glass of water quickly.
- Become frightened.
- Use smelling salts.
- Pull hard on your tongue.
- Place one-half teaspoon of dry sugar on the back of your tongue. (You can repeat this process 3 times at 2-minute intervals. Use corn syrup, not sugar, in young children.)

Medical Treatment

Treatment for hiccups depends on how severe they are.

- For the common hiccups that will usually stop on their own, home remedies are generally recommended.
- For more severe, persistent hiccups, your doctor may try medications to manage your hiccups. Chlorpromazine (Thorazine) is usually the first prescription medication tried for hiccups, although drugs such as baclofen (Lioresal) and medications used to treat convulsions such as phenytoin (Dilantin) have also been successful.
- Surgery to disable the phrenic nerve (the nerve that controls the diaphragm) is often the treatment of last resort.

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