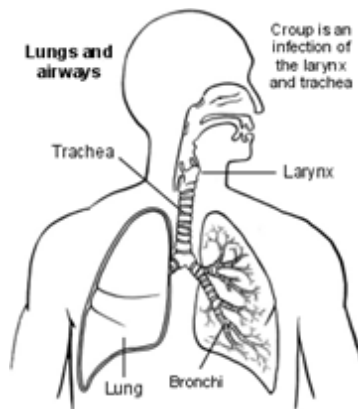


Croup in Children

What is croup?

Croup is common in young children and occurs most commonly between the ages of one and three years. Croup is a viral infection of the voice box (larynx) and windpipe (trachea). Croup often occurs in outbreaks or epidemics in the winter.



Nth.nhs.uk

Symptoms of croup?

- **Cough**, which is usually harsh and barking.
- **Breathing symptoms**, noisy breathing due to narrowing of the breathing tube. Breathing may become difficult if the narrowing becomes worse.
- **Other symptoms** that may occur include a runny nose, hoarseness and a sore throat. The symptoms are often worse at night.



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How serious is croup?

Symptoms are often fairly mild but sometimes they become severe. Most children with croup remain at home and soon recover.

About one in 10 children with croup are admitted to hospital for observation. Most children admitted to hospital go home within twenty-four hours as symptoms usually improve quickly.

What can I do to help a child with croup?

Be calm and reassuring. Sit the child upright on your lap if their breathing is noisy or difficult. Let the child find a comfortable position.

Lower the high temperature (fever). Give Paracetamol liquid or Ibuprofen liquid.

Do not make a child with breathing difficulties lie down or drink fluids if they don't want to, as this could make breathing worse.

Treatments

A steroid medicine is usually prescribed. A single dose often eases symptoms within a few hours.

Do not give cough medicines without doctor's advice.

Antibiotic medicines are not usually prescribed.

When to seek medical help

Always see a doctor quickly if:



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- [Breathing symptoms get worse](#). (Breathing is often noisy with mild croup but it is the **difficulty** in breathing that is worrying.) Signs that breathing is getting worse include: rapid breathing and increasing effort to breathe - you may see the chest or neck muscles being pulled in with each breath.
- The child becomes restless or agitated.
- The child looks unusually pale.
- A high temperature (fever) lasts longer than five days.

And call for an emergency ambulance if the child is:

- Blue (cyanosed).
- Unusually sleepy.
- Struggling to breathe.
- Drooling and unable to swallow.

Reference NICE Guidance 47 (2010)

Reference info: <https://patient.info/treatment-medication/steroids/oral-steroids>
<https://patient.info/signs-symptoms/shortness-of-breath/breathlessness-and-breathing-difficulties-dyspnoea>



Croup in Children

Please retain this leaflet for future reference

For further advice or information you can telephone your local Minor Injury Unit (MIU):

Chippenham Community Hospital

Rowden Hill

Chippenham, SN15 2AJ

Tel: 01249 456 403/4

Open: 07:00 to 23:00; seven days a week

Trowbridge Community Hospital

Adcroft Street

Trowbridge, BA14 8PH

Tel: 01225 711 329

Open: 07:00 to 23.00; seven days a week

Smoking will not be permitted on any NHS site in England. Smoking will not be permitted within any of our buildings or anywhere outside on our sites. Smoking facilities will not be provided. Please be considerate of others when vaping in hospital grounds.

This information sheet is available to order in other languages and formats. If you would like a copy, please contact us on 01793 604031 or email gwh.pals@nhs.net

Document Control

Division: Unscheduled Care

Department: Emergency Department

Approved Date: June 2019

Next Review Date: July 2022

Document Number: USC - PIL0071