

Croup advice sheet

Name of child..... Age..... Date/time advice given.....

Further advice/follow up.....

Name of professional..... Signature of professional.....

How is your child?



- Blue lips
- Unresponsive and very irritable
- Finding it very difficult to breathe
- Pauses in breathing or irregular breathing pattern
- Under 3 months and has temperature over 38°C

You need urgent help

Please phone 999 or go to the nearest Accident and Emergency Department



- Decreased feeding
- Passing less urine than normal
- Baby/child's health gets worse or you are worried
- If your baby/child is vomiting
- Your baby's temperature is above 39°C

You need to contact a doctor or nurse today

Please ring your GP Surgery or call NHS 111 – dial 111



- If none of the above factors are present

Self-Care

Using the advice overleaf you can provide the care your child needs at home

Some useful phone numbers



GP Surgery
(make a note of number here)

NHS 111
Dial 111

(available 24 hours – 7 days a week)

GP Extended Hours Service (Monday-Friday 6.30pm – 9.30pm, Weekends 8am – 9.30pm)

GP Out of Hours Service (9.30pm – 8am 7 days a week)

Can be contacted via NHS 111

For online advice: NHS Choices www.nhs.uk (available 24 hours – 7 days a week)

Croup advice sheet – babies/children under 2 years

What is croup?

Croup is an inflammation of the voice box characterised by a typical dry barking cough and sometimes leading to difficulty in breathing.

The condition most often affects small children. It is usually caused by a virus and occurs in epidemics particularly in the autumn and early spring.

Symptoms start with a mild fever and a runny nose. This progresses to a sore throat and a typical barking cough. Young children have smaller air passages and inflammation in the voice box leads to the gap between the vocal cords being narrowed. This may obstruct breathing, particularly when breathing in (stridor), which often starts in the middle of the night.

Croup develops over a period of one or two days, the severity and time that it persists varies, but often symptoms are worse on the second night of the cough

Croup is usually caused by a virus and for that reason antibiotics are not normally effective.

How can I help my child?

- Be calming and reassuring. A small child may become distressed with croup. Crying can make things worse
- Sit the child upright on your lap if their breathing is noisy or difficult. Let the child find a comfortable position.
- Give the child lots of cool drinks (if they are happy to take them).
- Lower the fever. If a child has a fever (high temperature) their breathing is often faster, and they may be more agitated and appear more ill.

To lower a fever:

- Give paracetamol or ibuprofen.
- Lightly dress the child if the room is not cold.

Be aware

Steam used to be commonly advised as a treatment. It was thought that steam may loosen the mucus and make it easier to breathe. However, there is little evidence that this does any good. Also, some children have been scalded by steam whilst being treated for croup. Therefore, steam is not recommended. Also, DO NOT make a child with breathing difficulty lie down or drink fluids if they don't want to, as that could make breathing worse.