

## Croup

You have been given this information leaflet because your child has been diagnosed with croup.

Croup is a viral infection that affects the windpipe (trachea), the airways to the lungs (the bronchi) and the voice box (larynx). It may develop after your child has had a cold. It commonly affects children between the ages of 6 months and 3 years old, it is uncommon after the age of 6 years old.



### Signs of Croup

- Barking cough like a seal.
- A hoarse voice.
- Difficulty with breathing.
- Noisy harsh sound when breathing in, called stridor.
- Cold-like symptoms i.e. high temperature, runny nose, sore throat. stridor.
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### Caring for your child with Croup

- Croup can usually be diagnosed by your GP and treated at home.
- Keep your child as comfortable as possible, be calm and reassuring. Croup may be distressing to a small child, crying may make breathing more difficult.
- Increase the amount of drinks your child has.
- If breast fed, continue to do so.
- If your child has a temperature or sore throat, you can give paracetamol and/or ibuprofen. Please check the medication label prior to giving to your child.

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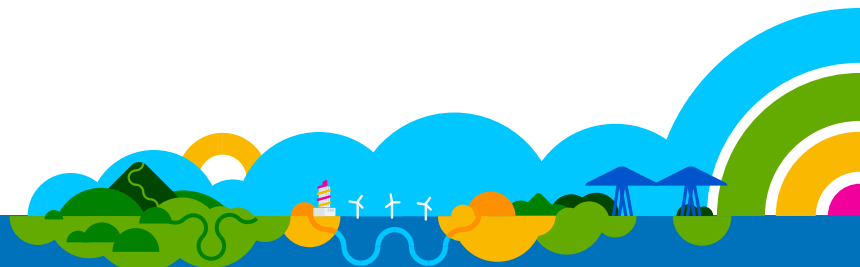
### Treating Croup

Mild croup may not need any specific treatment other than oral fluids and paracetamol for a temperature.

Croup with noisy or difficult breathing is often given a steroid medication, called dexamethasone. Only one dose is usually required. This will help reduce swelling in the airway, and reduce symptoms.

**Steam should not be used; this may lead to scalding your child.**

**Croup usually lasts 1-3 days, but may leave a mild cough for 1-2 weeks.**



## Seek immediate medical advice if any of the following occur:

- Severe breathing difficulties
- Blue skin or lips
- Unusually sleepy
- Drooling and unable to swallow
- A recurrence of symptoms the next evening.

## Treating Pain

### If needed, painkiller options include the following:

Paracetamol is usually recommended for painful sprains or strains.

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) relieve pain and may also limit inflammation and swelling. You can buy some types (eg, ibuprofen) at pharmacies, without a prescription either topically as a cream, or as tablets. **You should check the medication advice leaflet to ensure you are safe to take these i.e some patients with asthma or stomach ulcers may not be able to.**

If this does not help, you may need an additional stronger painkiller – such as codeine – you should discuss this with your pharmacist or GP.

## Further Information

### For further advice and information about your condition, please choose from the following:

- 'NHS Patient Choices' website: [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)
- 'Making Lives Better' patient website: [www.patient.info](http://www.patient.info)
- Telephone NHS 111
- Contact your General Practitioner

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