

- Your child may be nursed in a cubicle or in a bay with other children with the same infection. This is to reduce the risk of the infection spreading to other children on the ward
- Your nurse will tell you any precautions you need to take
- Children with bronchiolitis need lots of rest and should be disturbed as little as possible
- If your child is too breathless to feed by mouth it may be necessary to pass a feeding tube through your child's nose into the stomach (a nasogastric tube). Sometimes fluid needs to be given by a drip into a vein (intravenous fluids). This will be explained fully to you before starting the treatment.
- Some children need extra oxygen. This can be given in a number of ways your nurse will explain this to you before starting the treatment

This leaflet is for information only and should be used to support the information given to you by your doctor or nurse

References

SIGN guidelines number 91 Bronchiolitis in children a national clinical guideline
<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Bronchiolitis/pages/introduction.aspx>

Comments, compliments, concerns or complaints

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is concerned about the quality of care you receive and strives to maintain high standards of health care.

However we do appreciate that there may be an occasion where you, or your family, feel dissatisfied with the standard of service you receive. Please do not hesitate to tell us about your concerns as this helps us to learn from your experience and to improve services for future patients.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

This service aims to advise and support patients, families and carers and help sort out problems quickly on your behalf.

This service is available, and based, at The James Cook University Hospital but also covers the Friarage Hospital in Northallerton, our community hospitals and community health services. Please ask a member of staff for further information.

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Version 1,
Issue Date: October 2014,
Revision Date: October 2016

MIP54718

Bronchiolitis

Patient information



Women and
children's
services

What is bronchiolitis and what causes it?

Bronchiolitis is when the smallest air passages (bronchioles) in your babies lungs swell. This makes it more difficult for you baby to breathe.

Bronchiolitis is usually caused by a virus called respiratory syncytial virus, known as RSV. It is most common in babies but can also affect young toddlers. Most children will have had bronchiolitis before the age of 2 years.

Bronchiolitis is most common in the autumn and winter months and usually only causes mild 'cold like' symptoms.

Most children get better on their own, however some babies especially young ones can have difficulty with breathing or feeding and may need to be admitted to hospital.

What are the symptoms?

- Cold like symptoms – a runny nose
- Raised temperature
- Irritable cough and noisy breathing
- Breathing more quickly than normal or becoming breathless
- Making a whistling noise when breathing out (wheezing)

- Not feeding as well as normal
- Mucous vomiting with coughing

What can I do to help my baby?

Bronchiolitis is caused by a virus therefore it cannot be treated with antibiotics. Your child's body will fight the infection.

- Offer your baby small feeds (breast feeds, milk feeds or solids) more often, this can help prevent your baby getting breathless after feeds
- If you baby has a temperature or appears to be unsettled you can give paracetamol follow the instructions on the label to make sure you give the right dose
- Avoid smoking as this can make the symptoms of bronchiolitis worse
- Washing your hands before and after handling your child can reduce the risk of the infection spreading to others.

When should I seek medical advice?

You should seek medical advice if your child:

- Becomes blue or white around the lips
- You can see the skin between or under your child's ribs pulling in with each breath

- Becomes more breathless
- Is vomiting large amounts
- Is taking less than half their normal feeds

How long does bronchiolitis last?

- Breathlessness and poor feeding can last for several days
- Most children recover within 2-3weeks
- Children can return to nursery once they are feeding normally and are having no difficulty in breathing

Will it happen again and will there be any long term effects?

- It is unlikely to happen again but can sometimes
- Some babies become wheezy again in the future when they have a cold
- In most children there are no long-term problems

What if my child needs to be admitted to hospital?

Most children do not need to be admitted to hospital but some who are having difficulty in breathing or feeding may need to be admitted

- Secretions from the back of your child's nose may be tested to see if the RSV virus is present