

Treating your child's cough and breathing in croup

Children's Emergency Department

Last reviewed: October 2024

Next review: October 2027

Information for Patients, Parents & Carers

Leaflet number: 1183 Version: 1

What is croup?

Croup is swelling to the voice box (larynx) and windpipe (trachea) caused by a viral infection. It is most common in children between the ages of 6 months and 6 years as the windpipe is narrower. It can occur in older children and adults.

Symptoms include:

- a barking (or seal-like) cough.
- hoarse voice.
- noisy breathing (stridor).
- difficulty in breathing.
- similar symptoms of a viral infection may or may not be present e.g. fever, runny nose, feeling unwell, being off food.
- symptoms are typically worse at night.

How is croup treated?

Your child may be given a dose of steroids to reduce the swelling. This will help them to breathe better and make some of the noise go away. Stress makes croup worse, so keep your child comfortable. Don't try to force them into a different position, as they will naturally choose the position that helps them to breathe.

Cough medicines, steam and antibiotics won't make the swelling go away, or treat the virus, and so they are not recommended.

If your child is very unwell, we may give other medication and keep your child in hospital for some time to make sure they do not get worse.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

What else can I do to help my child?

If your child is miserable or distressed with a high fever, paracetamol or ibuprofen may help.
If your child is complaining of pain, give them regular pain relief.

For any childhood illness, getting your child to drink fluids regularly is important.

When should I call for help?

Please seek urgent medical attention if your child:

- has noisy breathing when not upset.
- is working hard with their breathing.
- has a high temperature (fever) which lasts longer than 5 days.

Call an emergency ambulance if your child is:

- struggling to breathe.
- drooling and unable to swallow.
- blue around the fingertips, mouth or tongue.
- unusually sleepy or confused.

Contact details

If you have any concerns you can contact the NHS helpline on 111 for advice.

Giving us your feedback

We would love to get some feedback on your visit today. Use your smart phone to scan this QR code for quick access to our online feedback survey form.



Alternatively, you can access the feedback form from our website:

<https://www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk/patients/thinking-of-choosing-us/patient-experience/>

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على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل
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Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

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