Children's Services

Croup



What is croup?

Croup is a common childhood illness that causes swelling of the breathing tube in babies and young children. Because the breathing tube in a child is small the swelling reduces the size of the tubes, causing a barking seal-like cough. It is usually caused by a virus. Therefore, antibiotics do not work for this condition.



What causes it?

The usual cause is a virus. Your child may have had a temperature or cold to begin with such as a runny nose. Sometimes croup appears to have no cause and there are no symptoms other than the cough, it can often be worse at night time.

Who gets croup?

Croup is common between the ages of 3 months and 6 years. As children become older their breathing tube becomes firmer and wider. Therefore croup is uncommon over the age of 6 years. Most children with croup can be cared for at home. The majority of children recover very well but it can become worse quite quickly.

What should I look for?

- A harsh barking cough.
- A hoarse voice.
- Struggling to breathe or very fast breathing.
- A rasping sound when breathing in.
- Dribbling and not wanting to drink.
- Restlessness and irritability.
- Becoming pale, blue or limp.

DO

- Keep calm and reassure your child.
- Help or encourage your child to sit up.
- Encourage oral fluids offer small amounts frequently to ensure your child remains hydrated.
- Give liquid paracetamol (calpol) or Ibuprofen (as long as not asthmatic) if your child has a fever.

DON'T

- Smoke near your child.
- Place in a steamy environment. There is little evidence this helps and can result in scalds.
- Give cough medicines or decongestants. There is no evidence that these help with croup.

compassionate care

Call 111 or your GP if:

- You think your child may have croup.
- You're worried.
- Your child is getting worse.
- Your child is no better after 48 hours.

What happens if I bring my child to the hospital?

Some children may require medicine to help reduce the swelling in the airway. This medicine will be in the form of liquid steroid.

Aren't steroids dangerous?

Only if taken in large amounts for a long time.

Is croup serious?

Most children that come to the hospital settle very quickly and can go home. Some children may be required to stay in hospital and may need further steroids and other treatment to help their breathing.

If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :

Childrens Ward
Calderdale Royal Hospital
Telephone No (01422) 223277

www.cht.nhs.uk

If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce, obrat'te se prosím na výše uvedené oddělení

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

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براہ مہربانی مندرجہ بالا شعبے میں ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

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