

# CROUP



Paediatric & Neonatology Department

## What is a Croup?

"Croup" is the term doctors use for a group of infections that affect the trachea, the main airway through which we breathe. Croup is common in children between 6 months and 3 years of age. It is uncommon after the age of 6 years. Croup causes a barking cough. In most children, croup goes away on its own. But some children with croup need to be seen by a doctor or nurse.

The usual cause of croup is a viral infection. Croup is common in young children especially during winter.

What are the symptoms of Croup?

Croup usually begins like a regular cold. Children who get croup start off by getting a runny nose and feeling stuffed up.

A day or 2 later, they usually:

- Get a cough that sounds like a seal barking
- Become hoarse (lose their voice or get a scratchy voice)
- Get a fever (temperature greater than 100.4°F or 38°C)
- Start having noisy, high-pitched breathing (called "stridor"), especially when they are active or upset
- The symptoms are usually worse at night.
- Croup may follow a cold but can also appear "out of the blue"



## What to do to help a child with croup?

- ✓ Be calming and reassuring-sit the child upright on your lap if their breathing is noisy or difficult.
- ✓ Let the child find a comfortable position.
- ✓ Lower the fever (high temperature)  
Give paracetamol liquid or ibuprofen
- ✓ Lightly dress the child if the room is not cold.
- ✓ Give the child lots of cool drinks.
- ✓ 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.



## When to seek medical help?

Many children with croup do not need to see a doctor. But you should watch for some important symptoms:

- Starts to turn blue or very pale
- Has a very hard time breathing.
- Can't speak or cry because they can't get enough air.
- Is very upset.
- Seems very sleepy or does not seem to respond to you.



## Contact us:

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