

FURTHER INFORMATION

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Croup

Information for patients
Accident and Emergency Department



WHAT IS CROUP?

- ❖ It is an inflammation of the voice box (larynx)
- ❖ Your child will normally have a barking cough and, sometimes, difficulty in breathing.
- ❖ Croup usually affects older babies and pre-school children.
- ❖ It is usually caused by a virus and is found to be most common in the winter.
- ❖ Antibiotics are not used to treat it because it is caused by a virus.

WHAT SYMPTOMS ARE THERE?

- ❖ Croup starts with a mild fever and runny nose.
- ❖ This progresses to a sore throat and a barking cough.
- ❖ When your child breathes in this may be noisy. This is because young children have small air passages and inflammation of the voice box leads to narrowing and the noise you hear.
- ❖ Croup symptoms are often worse overnight.
- ❖ Croup develops over one to two days and can last for a week to ten days.

TREATMENT GIVEN

Your child may have been given some steroids. This will help the breathing but will not stop the cough.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP YOUR CHILD?

- ❖ Be calm and reassure your child
- ❖ If your child cries it will make the symptoms worse because they are breathing harder.
- ❖ Sipping cool fluids will often help your child.
- ❖ Give regular paracetamol (e.g. Calpol) to reduce your child's temperature and to make them feel better.

WHEN TO CONTACT YOUR GP OR COME TO THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT.

- ❖ If your child has a high temperature – above 39°C.
- ❖ If your child appears very unwell.
- ❖ If your child is drooling and cannot swallow their own saliva.
- ❖ If your child's colour becomes grey or blue
- ❖ If your child is restless and struggling to breathe.