

Croup Advice Sheet

Name of Child Age Date / Time advice given

Further advice / Follow up

Name of Professional Signature of Professional

How is your child?



Red

- Blue lips
- Unresponsive and very irritable
- Finding it difficult to breathe with heaving of chest
- Pauses in breathing or irregular breathing patterns

You need urgent help
please phone 999 or go
to the nearest Accident
and Emergency
Department



Amber

- Not improving with treatment
- Breathing more noisy
- Breathing more laboured (chest 'indrawing')
- Persisting fevers of over 39 degrees centigrade

**You need to contact a
doctor or nurse today**
please ring your GP
surgery or call NHS 111
– dial 111



Green

- If none of the above

Self Care
Using the advice
overleaf you can
provide the care your
child needs at home

Some useful phone numbers



GP Surgery
(make a note of
number here)

NHS 111
dial 111

(available 24 hrs – 7 days
a week)

**Gloucester Health
Access Centre**

01452 336290
(Open from 8am to 8pm,
7 days a week including
bank holidays)

**GP Out of Hours
Service: appointments
booked via the
NHS 111 service**

(Open from 6.30pm to 8am
on weekdays and bank
holidays)

For online advice: NHS Choices www.nhs.uk (available 24 hrs – 7 days a week)

If you need language support or translation please inform the member of staff to whom you are speaking.

For more copies of this document, please email:

Croup Advice Sheet – Babies/Children under 2 years

What is Croup?

Croup is an inflammation of the voice box characterised by a typical dry barking cough and sometimes leading to difficulty in breathing.

The condition most often affects small children. It is usually caused by a virus and occurs in epidemics particularly in the autumn and early spring.

Symptoms start with a mild fever and a runny nose. This progresses to a sore throat and a typical barking cough. Young children have smaller air passages and inflammation in the voice box leads to the gap between the vocal cords being narrowed. This may obstruct breathing, particularly when breathing in (stridor), which often starts in the middle of the night.

Croup develops over a period of one or two days, the severity and time that it persists varies, but often symptoms are worse on the second night of the cough.

Croup is usually caused by a virus and for that reason antibiotics are not normally effective.

How can I help my child?

- Be calming and reassuring. A small child may become distressed with croup. Crying can make things worse
- Sit the child upright on your lap if their breathing is noisy or difficult. Let the child find a comfortable position.
- Give the child lots of cool drinks (if they are happy to take them).
- A cool environment such as taking your child outside at night for a brief period may help
- Lower the fever. If a child has a fever (high temperature) their breathing is often faster, and they may be more agitated and appear more ill. To lower a fever:
 - Give paracetamol or ibuprofen.
 - Lightly dress the child if the room is not cold.

Be aware

Steam used to be commonly advised as a treatment. It was thought that steam may loosen the mucus and make it easier to breathe. However, there is little evidence that this does any good. Also, some children have been scalded by steam whilst being treated for croup. Therefore, steam is not recommended. Also, **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.