

Notes

Contact details

Please contact us at The Royal Surrey County Hospital Emergency Department on **01483 571122 Ext 2352**.

PALS and Advocacy contact details

Contact details of independent advocacy services can be provided by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are located on the right hand side as you enter the main reception area. PALS are also your first point of contact for health related issues, questions or concerns surrounding RSCH patient services.

Telephone: 01483 402757

Email: rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net

Opening hours: 9.00am–3.00pm
Monday to Friday

If you would like information documents in large print, on tape or in another language or form please contact PALS.

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Patient information leaflet

Croup



**Accident & Emergency
Department**

What is Croup?

Croup is when your child's upper airway and windpipe becomes swollen, making it hard for your child to breathe. It is usually caused by a virus. It is common in the autumn and early spring, and typically affects children between the ages of 3 months and 6 years, although it can develop in children up to 15 years old. Symptoms normally peak after 1-3 days, and then improve, although an irritating cough may persist for around a week.

What are the symptoms?

- A dry barking cough
- A runny nose or cold
- Mild temperature
- Sore throat, hoarse voice
- Difficult, noisy breathing, especially when they breathe in
- Difficulty feeding
- Commonly worse at night

What can I do to help?

- Sitting in a warm room generating steam, such as shower or bathroom may help
- You will need to comfort your child, as the symptoms may get worse when they are distressed.
- You can encourage your child to drink plenty as it may help relieve their sore throat.
- Sitting your child upright will help their breathing.
- If your baby has a temperature, then give them paracetamol or ibuprofen according to the instructions, and try to cool them down by letting them wear less layers of clothing.
- If your child is on any medications or inhalers, then you need to carry on using these as prescribed by your doctor.
- Try to avoid smoking around your baby, as cigarette smoke can make breathing more difficult for your child.
- As croup is caused by a virus, antibiotics won't help. However, washing your hands after handling your baby will stop the virus from spreading.

When should I get further help?

Whilst mild croup usually does not need medical treatment, you should call an ambulance if there are signs of the following:

- Noisier and more difficult breathing
- Your child using his chest or neck muscles to breathe, or if their tummy is being pulled in under their ribs when they breathe.
- If your child becomes restless or agitated, or floppy
- Your child becoming pale or blue
- If they water at the mouth, salivate; dribble, and are unable to swallow
- Call your GP/111 if: A high temperature persists despite giving them paracetamol or ibuprofen

Key reference source(s)

- NHS Choices/croup
- www.patient.co.uk/croup