



1177

## Croup

Croup is caused by a virus infection. Children with croup will often have a barking cough and wheezing. There are several things you can do at home to reduce symptoms. Sometimes children with croup will need further treatment to relieve symptoms.

### Symptoms:

Croup usually causes one or more of the following:

- A barking cough.
- Wheezing, especially when breathing in.
- Difficulty breathing.
- A hoarse voice.
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Before the croup symptoms start, your child can have had normal cold symptoms for a day or so.

### *Most common at night*

Croup symptoms are due to swelling in the area around the vocal cords. This swelling gets worse when lying down. This is why croup symptoms often start in the evening or at night when your child is going to bed or has been asleep for a while.

Symptoms often start with the barking cough and wheezing when breathing in. Croup symptoms usually last one or two days, rarely longer than a week. Some children even have symptoms during the day, even if they are worse at night.

Croup can be unpleasant for both your child and for you as a grown up. But it is rare that croup leads to serious illness.

### *Svårare besvär med andningen More severe difficulty with breathing*

Sometimes symptoms can be more severe. Keep an eye on your child's breathing and how unwell they are otherwise.

If your child has more severe difficulties with breathing, their breathing will appear more strained and difficult. They will breathe faster and have a higher pulse. The skin between their ribs and around the collarbones can start to retract/pull inwards when your child breathes in.

### What can I do at home?

There are several things you can do at home to reduce symptoms and make it easier for your child.

Here are some examples:

- It usually helps just to have your child sit in your lap or stand up. This reduces the swelling.
- Opening windows or going outside to breathe cooler air can help.
- Comfort and calm your child. It's normal that your child will be scared, scream or cry and this makes the symptoms worse. Try and also keep yourself calm, so you have a better chance to calm your child down.
- Try to get your child to drink something, because drinking can help a cough.
- You can use nasal spray if your child has a blocked nose. This can make it easier to breathe.

You can raise the head end of the bed when your child's breathing is better and they are going back to bed. This will help prevent it happening again. The easiest way to do this is to use extra pillows at the head end of the bed. Put the extra pillows under the mattress so they don't slip out/away.

Children can have a hard time eating and drinking because of their cough or because they have a sore throat. You can give your child pain relieving medicine, like paracetamol.

### Where and when should I seek healthcare?

It is usually okay to follow the above advice if your child has a barking cough, some difficulty with breathing, but is otherwise well.

But sometimes you should seek care for your child.

Contact a vårdcentral or a jourcentral if your child has one or more of the following symptoms:

- Your child has difficulty breathing that don't get better after 15-30 mins despite sitting upright in your lap.
- Your child is extremely tired, for example you can't make contact with them, or are uninterested in their surroundings, or don't have enough energy to eat.

If the vårdcentral or jourcentral is closed, seek care at an emergency department.

Ring 1177 if you want advice from a nurse. You can get advice on how to assess your child's symptoms or where you can seek care.

If it's an emergency

Ring 112 if your child has difficulty breathing and has blue lips or palms.