



Croup

What is croup?

Croup is a common respiratory problem in young children. Croup is often caused by viral infections resulting in inflammation of the larynx and trachea, narrowing the airway just below the vocal cords making breathing noisy and difficult. Croup is most frequently seen in a child infected with a cold.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of croup include a “barking”, “seal-like” cough and stridor (the harsh sound of air moving through a swollen airway while breathing in). Most children also have a fever ranging from low grade to 104 degrees.

How is croup treated?

Croup usually lasts three to four days, is generally worse at night and can have a sudden onset. Increased moisture and/or cool air can help alleviate the symptoms. Increased fluid intake is also important. Antibiotics and cough medicines are generally not helpful in treating croup. Oral corticosteroids (such as prednisolone or dexamethasone) are sometimes used to reduce inflammation and swelling.

School/childcare attendance

Croup is very contagious to other children. A child may contract the virus by breathing infected respiratory droplets coughed or sneezed into the air. Virus particles in these droplets may also survive on toys and other surfaces. If a child touches a contaminated surface then touches his eyes, nose or mouth, an infection may follow. Children should remain home from school or childcare if diagnosed with a viral respiratory infection.

For more information, contact the Guilford County Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health at (336) 641-7777 or visit www.myguilford.com

Reference: <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/croup/basics/causes/con-20014673>