

If your child is upset and distressed it may make symptoms worse. Sleeping in a more upright position may help.

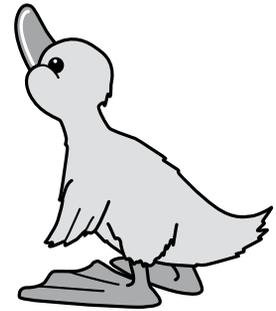
Smoking, even outside, can have an unwanted effect on your child, especially if your child has any respiratory symptoms. If you must smoke, you should do it outdoors, as your child will be more susceptible to the effects of tobacco smoke in a confined space.

Be aware that, even if you smoke outside, you will still be breathing out the chemicals from the tobacco and they will also be present on your clothes for 20–30 minutes after finishing your cigarette. **Your child will be affected by this second-hand smoke.** You should avoid picking up your child or having close contact with him or her during this time period.

If you want to give us smoking, please contact your GP or practice nurse, or access services through **Live Well Suffolk** on **01473 229292** or online at **www.livewellsuffolk.org.uk**

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Croup



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What is croup?

Croup is an infection that affects the voice box (larynx) and the airway to the lungs (trachea) making them inflamed.

What is the cause of the infection?

Croup is often caused by a virus (usually parainfluenza) and is more common during the winter months. It is spread through coughing and sneezing.

Who does it usually affect?

Croup usually affects young children (more often boys) between six months and three years of age, and can occur more than once. As children grow, their larger airways are less affected by the virus.

What are the signs and symptoms?

These are similar to a cold, such as a runny nose and a raised temperature.

One to four days after becoming infected, your child will develop a characteristic 'seal-like' barking cough. This may include a hoarse or croaky voice, usually accompanied by a rasping sound when breathing in and some respiratory distress due to obstruction of the upper airways.

How long will the illness last?

Croup is usually at its worst for 48 hours after the cough has started and generally gets better on its own over a number of days. However, a more 'regular' cough may continue. Occasionally, children can go on to develop a secondary infection such as pneumonia or ear infection(s).

Will my child be admitted to hospital?

Most cases of croup do not need to be treated because the condition is usually self-limiting (gets better on its own). Only a small number of children need a short hospital admission.

Steroids (such as dexamethasone or prednisolone) may be given to reduce the swelling of the airways. You may be given one dose of steroids to take home.

If your child has severe symptoms, he or she may be given steroids or adrenaline by nebuliser. A nebuliser vaporises medications which is then inhaled through a mask.

Can I prevent the illness?

There is not much that can be done to prevent croup because the infection is spread through infected droplets of moisture via coughs and sneezes. Therefore, the condition can be easily transmitted from one person to another.

However, you should teach your child to practise good personal hygiene from an early age, such as washing their hands and always to cough and sneeze into a tissue, before discarding it immediately.

Medication, such as paracetamol and ibuprofen suspension, to reduce pain and lower a raised temperature, plus giving extra fluids, will help your child feel better.

