

Caring for your baby / child with Bronchiolitis

Children's Outpatients Department

What is bronchiolitis?

Bronchiolitis means inflammation of the bronchioles (tiniest airways in your baby's lungs). Infected bronchioles become swollen and full of mucus. This can make it more difficult for your baby to breathe. It is usually caused by a virus called the Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV). Other viruses are sometimes the cause. RSV is a common cause of colds in older children and adults. RSV is spread in tiny water droplets coughed and sneezed into the air.

Who gets bronchiolitis?

Bronchiolitis in the UK usually occurs in the winter months (November to March). It is estimated that as many as 1 in 3 babies in the UK under the age of 12 months develop bronchiolitis at some point. It most commonly occurs in babies aged 3-6 months old. Most babies get better on their own. Some babies (about 3 in 100), especially the very young ones, can have difficulty with breathing or feeding and may need to go to hospital. Babies at higher risk of developing a more serious illness with bronchiolitis include: premature babies, babies with heart conditions, and babies who already have a lung condition.




What are the symptoms of bronchiolitis?

- Cold symptoms: a runny nose, cough and fever (less than 39°C) are usual for the first 2-3 days
- After a few days your baby's cough may get worse
- Fast breathing and noisy breathing may develop as the infection 'travels' down to the bronchioles. The number of breaths per minute may go as high as 60-80
- You can often see the muscles between the ribs moving inward during each breath. This is because the baby needs more effort to breathe than normal
- Sometimes in very young babies, bronchiolitis may cause brief pauses in breathing
- As breathing becomes more difficult, your baby may have difficulty feeding. Your baby may have fewer wet nappies. Your baby may vomit after feeding.

The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.

- Please decontaminate your hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol gel if available
- If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, cough or other respiratory symptoms, a temperature or any loss of taste or smell please do not visit the hospital or any other care facility and seek advice from 111
- Keep the environment clean and tidy
- Let's work together to keep infections out of our hospitals and care homes.

How is your child?

| | | |
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|  Red | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Blue lips• Unresponsive and very irritable• Finding it difficult to breathe• Pauses in breathing or irregular breathing pattern | <p>You need urgent help Please phone 999 or to to the nearest Accident and Emergency</p> |
|  Amber | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decreasing feeding• Passing less urine than normal• Baby / child's health gets worse or you you are worried• If your baby / child is vomiting• Your baby's temperature is above 39°C | <p>You need to contact a nurse or doctor today Please ring your GP Surgery or call NHS 111 – dial 111</p> |
|  Green | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If none of the above factors are present | <p>Self care Using the advice in this guide you can provide the care your child needs at home</p> |

How can I help my baby?

- If your baby is not feeding as normal, offer feeds little and often
- If your baby has a fever, you can give them paracetamol at the recommended dose. If your baby is over 3 months you can also give them ibuprofen
- If your baby is already taking medicine, you should continue to use them
- Bronchiolitis is a 'self-limiting' illness. This means it will normally go as the immune system clears the virus. There is no medicine that will kill the virus. Neither antibiotics nor inhalers will help
- Make sure your baby is not exposed to tobacco smoke. Passive smoking can damage your baby's health. It makes breathing problems like bronchiolitis worse

How long will bronchiolitis last?

- Typically, symptoms peak in severity 3-5 days after starting
- Most babies get better within 2 weeks
- An irritating cough and wheezing (whistle with breathing out) can last longer – up to 6 weeks after other symptoms have gone
- Your baby can go back to nursery/day care as soon as he/she is well enough.

Some Useful Phone Numbers

- GP Surgery:.....
- NHS 111 – Dial 111 (available 24hrs – 7 days a week)
- GP Out of Hours Service – appointments booked via NHS 111 (Open from 6:30pm – 8:30am, 7 days a week)
- Paediatric Assessment Unit (available for 48hrs from discharge) 01902 695047

For online advice:

NHS website: www.nhs.uk (available 24hrs – 7 days a week).

English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowaliby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。