

CROUP

Q. WHAT IS IT?

A. It is an inflammation of the upper airway (the voice box & windpipe) that is usually caused by a cold virus. The telltale sign is a loud barking cough that sounds like a seal barking. Croup is likely to occur during the winter and early spring. Croup usually lasts 3-7 days and is often worse at night.

Q. IS IT DANGEROUS?

A. Even though the cough sounds frightening, most cases of croup are mild and can be treated at home as directed by your child's primary care provider. Some signs of an emergency include:

- Drooling or difficulty swallowing
- Very fast breathing
- The stomach or skin between the ribs seems to pull in with each breath
- Pale or bluish color around the mouth
- High fever
- Very sick appearance

Q. IS IT CONTAGIOUS?

A. Croup is most likely to occur when the cold viruses are at their peak (winter and early spring). Not all children who come in contact with the viruses will get croup, but instead they will have symptoms of a head cold.

Q. HOW IS CROUP TREATED?

A. For mild cases, breathing moist air will relieve many of the symptoms. Using a cool-mist humidifier in the bedroom or having your child sit in the bathroom filled with shower steam may help. Also, wrapping your child in a blanket and taking a walk outside in the cool night air for a few minutes may help. Sitting upright also makes breathing easier and warm fluids, such as soup, may help soothe the cough. More serious cases may require medication.

If you suspect your child has croup, please contact your child's primary care provider.

(Source: www.kidshealth.org & www.mayoclinic.com)

FROM WWW.SCHOOL-NURSING.ORG