

# Croup

Croup is commonly caused by a viral infection. Unlike other viral upper respiratory infections, croup creates a swelling in the airway. This swelling can be mild, causing a “hoarse” voice, or may be more severe, causing a “barky” cough and high-pitched breathing. Symptoms are often more severe at night. Croup can be frightening for parents and children alike. Croup is usually seen in the late fall and winter months and typically infects children less than 3 years old. Because croup is caused by a virus, antibiotics won’t improve the symptoms. There are a few actions that will help to make your child more comfortable until the illness resolves on it’s own in 2-3 days:

- Steam up the bathroom and let your child breath the warm,moist air for 15-20 minutes.
- Taking your bundled child outside at night to breath the cool air for 15-20 minutes will also help.
- Use a cool-mist humidifier in your child’s room.
- Your peditrician may also prescribe steroid medication to help with severe symptoms.

## When to call:

- If your child appears to have worsening symptoms.
- If your child stops eating or drinking.
- If your child becomes fatigued.

## Go to the nearest emergency room or call 9-1-1 immediately if:

- Your child’s breathing becomes more labored.
- Your child cannot speak, is sleepy, or is difficult to arouse.



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