



Children's Emergency Center

Jacksonville Wolfson Children's Hospital at Baptist Medical Center • 904/393-2399
Open 24 Hours

CARING FOR A CHILD WITH CROUP

Croup is a viral illness which causes a swelling around the voice box. Your child will have a cough that sounds like a dog or a seal barking. The cough will be worse at night. Your child's voice may be hoarse or raspy and he or she may complain of a sore throat.

If your child has croup, you should:

- Stay calm. Croup can be frightening to both you and your child. When your child gets scared, the cough can get worse. A calm, reassuring parent can help to quiet an anxious child.
- Use a cool-mist vaporizer in your child's room.
- Take your child into a closed bathroom with a hot shower running, and sit with your child for 20 to 30 minutes so he or she can breathe the steam. The steam will help relieve congestion.
- Dress your child appropriately and take him or her outside into the cool air for 20 to 30 minutes.
- Give your child plenty of fluids, such as cold drinks and Popsicles.
- Give your child medicine, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol), if your child has a fever.

You should call your doctor or return to the Children's Emergency Center if:

- Your child does not improve after trying the above treatments.
- Your child's breathing gets worse or he or she turns blue.
- Your child appears to have so much trouble breathing that he or she does not play, drink liquids or sleep for more than 30 minutes.
- Your child has difficulty swallowing or starts drooling.
- Your child develops a high fever which does not get better with acetaminophen (Tylenol).
- Your child's cough is not better in four to five days.