



Bronchiolitis (children under 2 years)

Information for patients, relatives and carers

What is Bronchiolitis?

Bronchiolitis is an infection causing the smallest airways in a child's lungs to become swollen. This can make it more difficult for a child to breathe.




- Bronchiolitis is caused by a virus. (RSV-respiratory syncytial virus)
- It is common in the winter months and usually only cause's mild cold-like symptoms.
- Most children get better on their own. Some, especially very young, can have difficulty breathing or feeding and may need to go to hospital.
- It can take up to 2 weeks to get better and the cough can last up to 6 weeks.
- Your child can go back to nursery as soon as they are well enough (feeding normally and with no breathing difficulties). There is usually no need to see your doctor if your child is recovering well.

What are the symptoms?

1. Your child may have a runny nose, cough and a temperature. After a few days the cough may become worse.
2. Your child's breathing may be faster than normal, and it may become noisy. They may need to make more effort to breathe.
3. Sometimes, in very young babies, bronchiolitis may cause them to have brief pauses in their breathing. If this happens you should attend your local Emergency Department.
4. As breathing becomes more difficult, a baby may not be able to take the usual amount of milk by breast or bottle.
5. You may notice fewer wet nappies than normal.
6. Your child may vomit after feeding and become irritable.

Caring for your child at home

- If your child does not have any red or amber symptoms in the traffic light advice then you can care for your child at home. If your child is already taking medicines or inhalers, you should carry on using these.
- Bronchiolitis is caused by a virus; antibiotics will not help.
- If your child is in pain or distressed and over 3 months old, you can give them liquid paracetamol or ibuprofen. At home, we do not recommend giving paracetamol and ibuprofen at the same time. If your child has not improved after two to three hours, you may want to give them the other medicine. Never exceed the dose on the packaging
- If your child is not feeding as normal, offer smaller feeds more frequently. If your child is breastfed, continue to feed on demand.
- **Make sure your child is never exposed to tobacco smoke.**
- Passive smoking can seriously damage children's health. It can make breathing problems like bronchiolitis worse. Remember, smoke remains on your clothes when you smoke anywhere, including outside. More information is available to help you stop smoking.

 <p>RED</p>	<p>If your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ has blue lips or is unresponsive or very irritable ▪ is <u>struggling to breathe</u> or has unusually long pauses in breathing or has an irregular breathing pattern ▪ or is unable to swallow or is drooling ▪ is too breathless to feed or speak ▪ is unable to take fluids ▪ is pale, drowsy, weak or quiet 	<p>You need urgent help.</p> <p>Go to the nearest Hospital Emergency (A&E) Department or phone 999</p>
 <p>AMBER</p>	<p>If your child has any one of these features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appears to be getting worse or you are worried ▪ Restless or irritable ▪ Increased difficulty in breathing ▪ Becoming unusually pale ▪ Temperature of 39°C despite paracetamol and/or ibuprofen ▪ Reduced fluid intake by half usual amount ▪ Passed urine less than twice in 12 hours ▪ Vomiting 	<p>You need to contact a doctor or nurse today.</p> <p>Please ring your GP surgery or call NHS 111 - dial 111</p>
 <p>GREEN</p>	<p>If none of the features in the red or amber boxes above are present</p>	<p>Self-care</p> <p>Continue providing your child's care at home. If you are still concerned about your child, call NHS 111 – dial 111</p>

① If you have further concerns about your condition, please contact your GP. If you are not sure what to do, call 111 or get help from 111 online:
<https://111.nhs.uk/> [When to use NHS 111 - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email
yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net

An answer phone is available out of hours.

Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you require this information in a different language or format, for example Braille, large print, Easy Read or audio, please ask the staff who are looking after you.

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