

Memo:

Pediatric Emergency Department (Pronto Soccorso) tel. 0498213515



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Salus Pueri Foundation has been active since 1992 and its main goal is to raise funds to support the activities of the Pediatric Hospital of Padua. Every day we work to make our hospital a welcoming and child and family friendly place, and to promote a culture where humanization is at the heart of care.


These parents information guides of the Pediatric Emergency Department of Padua have been created to facilitate the provision of clear and complete information to parents whose kids are experiencing acute health issues.

The parents information guides are not intended to replace the recommendations and tailored advice provided by your pediatrician.

Support the Pediatric Hospital of Padua!

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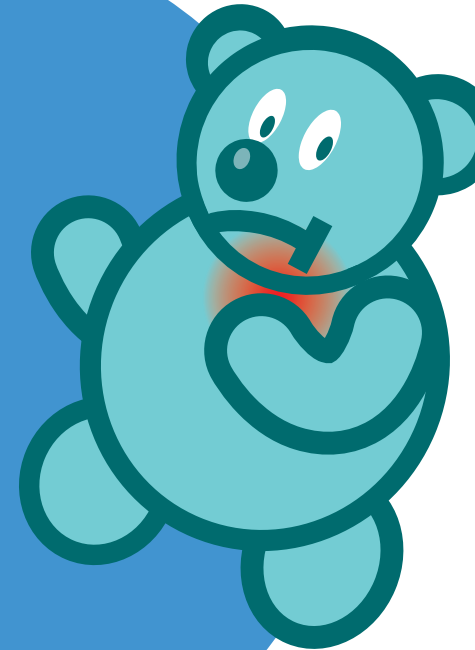


Dipartimento per la Salute
della Donna e del Bambino
- Pronto Soccorso Pediatrico -



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Croup



Parents
information
guides



What is croup?

Croup is a respiratory infection that leads to swelling of the voice box (larynx, where vocal cords lay). This swelling makes the airway narrower, so it is harder to breathe.

Signs and Symptoms:

Croup is characterized by a combination of the following symptoms:

- **Harsh and barking cough that might sound like a seal;**
- **Hoarse voice;**
- **Squeaky, high pitched noise, when your child breathes in, which is called stridor**

Difficulty to breathe (the worse the narrowing of the airway the greater the difficulty to breathe); fast/irregular breathing, the skin between the child's ribs or under their neck may suck in when they breathe (called intercostal and jugular retractions); the child's belly can abnormally move in and out during breathing and your child may experience difficulty in speaking/crying;
Fever (uncommon and usually not high)

Symptoms occur more frequently during the night, and often appear suddenly; a mild cold may precede the onset of typical symptoms by a few days.

Background information:

- croup mostly affects children between 6 months and 6 years of age;
- Symptoms can last 3-4 days;
- Some children show multiple episodes.

When to urgently seek medical care or go to the Hospital Emergency Department (Pronto Soccorso):

- If your child looks very sick, miserable;
- If your child looks pale or his lips and skin look blue/dark (cyanosis);
- In your child looks drowsy or is struggling to breathe;
- If your child has loud stridor at rest
- If symptoms have lasted many days and did not improve with prescribed treatment;
- If your child starts to drool or cannot swallow;
- If your child is less than 6 months old.

Care at home:

- Keep the child calm and in a comfortable position;
- Administer antipyretic medications in case of fever and discomfort;
- Administer the medications prescribed by your doctor;
- Carefully observe the child and look for symptoms/signs requiring medical evaluation.

Medications:

In most cases croup is caused by a viral infection, for which there is no specific antiviral treatment. This is the reason why antibiotics are NOT indicated.

Steroids are the only anti-inflammatory medications that are effective in improving symptoms by reducing swelling of the airway. Steroids are equally effective when administered by mouth (for example Dexamethasone, Prednisone, Betamethasone) or by nebulization (for instance Budesonide).

In the hospital setting intravenous steroid administration may be necessary and nebulization with adrenaline can be also used in the most severe cases.

Humidified air inhalation, often suggested in the past, is NO longer recommendend. Cough sedatives are NOT recommended.