



# CROUP

Croup is an *inflammation* (soreness) of the *larynx* (voice box) often caused by a viral infection during a cold. It usually lasts several days and generally is worse at night. Because of its viral cause, *antibiotics* (medications that kill germs) will not help in treatment. It is generally characterized by a barking cough and low-grade temperature.

## HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS:

- > Calm your child during an attack. This will help their breathing. Remain calm yourself. Gently hold your little one to your chest and talking soothingly and calmly and rubbing their back will help allay their fears and help them breathe more easily.
- > Steam helps. Running water forcefully from a shower or into a tub in a closed bathroom may help with this. If the night air is cool or cold, this will help, but dress your child warmly.
- > A cool mist vaporizer or steamer in your child's room will also help at night. Do not use the older hot steam vaporizers. These are not as helpful and may cause burns.
- > During an attack, a warm clear liquid diet is helpful. Good hydration is important. Do not attempt to give liquids or food during a coughing spell or when breathing appears difficult.
- > Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) may be used for temperatures. Ibuprofen is also anti-inflammatory, so may also help with the inflammation present.
- > Watch for signs of *dehydration* (loss of body fluids) including dry lips and mouth and little or no urination.

## GO TO THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT IMMEDIATELY IF:

- > Your child is having trouble breathing, or is leaning forward to breathe and drooling. These signs along with inability to swallow may be signs of a more serious problem and you should go immediately to the emergency department or call for immediate emergency help. (Dial 9-1-1).
- > It becomes more difficult for your child to breathe, or there is any deterioration in the condition that originally brought you and your child here today.
- > Your child is retracting (the skin between the ribs is being sucked in during inspiration).
- > The lips or fingernails of your child are becoming blue (cyanotic).

