

Bronchiolitis Advice Sheet

(a cause of persistent cough, mild fever and feeding difficulties in infants)

Advice for parents and carers of children younger than 2 years

Name of child _____ Age _____ Date/time advice given _____
Further advice/follow up _____

Name of professional _____ Signature of professional _____

How is your child? (traffic light advice)


Red

If your child has any one of these symptoms:

- blue lips
- is unresponsive or very irritable
- is struggling to breathe
- pauses in breathing
- irregular breathing pattern

You need urgent help
Please phone 999
or go to the nearest
Hospital Emergency
Department


Amber

If your child has any one of these symptoms:

- decreased feeding
- passing less urine than normal
- vomiting
- temperature is above 38°C
- finding it difficult to breath
- or if your child's health gets worse or you are worried

You need to contact a doctor or nurse today
Please ring your GP
surgery or call NHS
111 – dial 111


Green

If none of the features in the red or amber boxes above are present.

Self care
Using the advice
overleaf you can
provide the care your
child needs at home

Some useful phone numbers (you may want to add some numbers on here too)



GP surgery (note the number here): _____

Health visiting team: _____

NHS111 is a service available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to make it easier for you to access NHS healthcare services in England. Dial 111 when you need medical help fast but it is not a 999 emergency.

For online advice: **NHS Choices** www.nhs.uk (available 24 hours, 7 days a week)

Family Information Service: telephone 0300 200 1004

www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/family-information-service

If you need language support or translation please inform the member of staff to whom you are speaking.

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What is Bronchiolitis?

Bronchiolitis is an infectious disease when the tiniest airways in your child's lungs become swollen. This can make it more difficult for your child to breathe. Bronchiolitis is caused by virus infections. It is common in winter months and usually only causes mild cold like symptoms. Most children get better on their own. Some children, especially very young ones, can have difficulty with breathing or feeding and may need to go to hospital.

What are the symptoms?

- Your child may have a runny nose and sometimes a temperature and a cough.
 - After a few days your child's cough may become worse.
 - Your child's breathing may be faster than normal and it may become noisy.
 - He or she may need to make more effort to breathe.
 - Sometimes, in the very young babies, Bronchiolitis may cause them to have brief pauses in their breathing. If you are concerned see the traffic light advice overleaf.
 - As breathing becomes more difficult, your baby may not be able to take their usual amount of milk by breast or bottle.
 - You may notice fewer wet nappies than usual.
 - Your child may vomit after feeding and become irritable.
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How can I help my baby?

- If your child is not feeding as normal offer smaller feeds but more frequently.
 - Children with Bronchiolitis may have some signs of distress and discomfort. You may wish to give either liquid Paracetamol or liquid Ibuprofen to give some relief of symptoms. However please note this will not change either the severity or duration of the illness. Please read and follow the instructions on the medicine container.
 - Over the counter (OTC) medicine may not be available to purchase for all age groups. Ask your pharmacist.
 - If your child is already taking medicines or inhalers, you should carry on using these. If you find it difficult to get your child to take them, ask your Pharmacist, Health Visitor or GP. Bronchiolitis is caused by a virus so antibiotics will not help.
 - Make sure your child is not exposed to tobacco smoke. Passive smoking can seriously damage your child's health. It makes breathing problems like bronchiolitis worse.
 - Remember smoke remains on your clothes even if you smoke outside. If you would like help to give up smoking you can get advice from your local GP surgery or the Surrey Stop Smoking Service helpline: telephone 0845 602 3608, email stop.smoking@surreyccg.gov.uk
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How long does Bronchiolitis last?

- Most children with bronchiolitis will seem to worsen during the first 1–3 days of the illness before beginning to improve over the next two weeks. The cough may go on for a few more weeks. Antibiotics are not required.
- Your child can go back to nursery or day care as soon as he or she is well enough (that is feeding normally and with no difficulty in breathing).
- There is usually no need to see your doctor if your child is recovering well. But if you are worried about your child's progress discuss this with your Health Visitor, Practice Nurse or GP or contact NHS 111.