

## Bronchiolitis

### *What is it?*

Bronchiolitis is a swelling of the small airways in the lungs which affects babies and young children (usually under two years). The most common cause is a winter virus.

### *What are the symptoms?*

- Your baby's breathing rate may be faster than usual.
- Your baby may sound short of breath and sometimes wheezy when you listen to their breathing.
- Your baby may also have a cough sound like their nose is blocked.
- Your baby may struggle to feed as much as usual.
- Your baby may vomit some of their feed, which will have a slimy appearance
- As breathing and feeding become difficult, your baby may look pale, sweaty and tired.

### *What treatment can I give?*

In most cases the cough will go away without treatment. Antibiotics will not help and cough medicines will not usually have an effect.

Do not give other medicines, especially if the ingredients cannot be easily identified.

Your child's breathing difficulties may mean they drink less than usual. Encourage your child to drink small amounts but more often. Look out for signs of dehydration, such as your baby not passing urine often or having a dry mouth.

### *What else can I do?*

- Tobacco smoke can make breathing more difficult for your baby and must be avoided. Tobacco smoke also increases the risk of cot death, breathing disorders and heart disease.
- Keep your child away from crowded places until they are fully recovered
- Keep your child away from other children who are under two years old for three weeks.

### *When to seek help*

Seek help if your child is:

- Becoming more short of breath

- Developing a high temperature
- Feeling more tired
- Having any changes in their eye colour, such as blue or grey tinges
- Taking very small amounts of fluid

Medical advice can be sought from your GP, NHS 111 phone line or contact the hospital team who originally saw your child.

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If your child is very unwell and you think it is an emergency then you can get help by calling 999. Most of the time this is not necessary and your GP or the 111 phone line can help you.