

Bronchiolitis

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James Paget
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Information for parents/carers.

What is Bronchiolitis?

Bronchiolitis is a common respiratory infection, mainly affecting babies and young children in the winter months. The infection causes the airways in the lungs to become inflamed and narrowed, resulting in breathing difficulties. This is caused by a virus, the most common being Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV). Symptoms include:

- Runny nose
- Coughing
- Increased rate of breathing
- Noisy breathing
- Reduced feeding
- Irritability

Diagnosis

There is a test available to identify Bronchiolitis caused by RSV. A sample can be taken from the back of the nose using a thin tube. This detects any infection.

Treatment

There is no specific drug treatment for Bronchiolitis; however additional care and observation on the children's ward may be required to aid the breathing and feeding difficulties linked with the infection. Children with Bronchiolitis occasionally require extra oxygen to be delivered through nasal tubes to maintain their oxygen levels.

Sometimes babies and young children, especially those who are premature and with existing medical conditions, will require extra help with their breathing. This involves the use of equipment, such as CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure), Optiflow or Airvo.

As Bronchiolitis can cause reduced feeding, support with this may also be required. Occasionally, babies and young children may require a feeding tube, which is passed down the nose directly into the stomach, to ensure they get adequate amounts.

Infection Control

To prevent the spread of Bronchiolitis, babies and young children are nursed in cubicles or in an isolated area on the Children's Ward. It is important to minimise the spread of the virus, so the ward ask you to limit the number of visitors and not to bring siblings under two to visit. Handwashing with soap and water is also essential to prevent the spread of the virus.

Discharge Home

Once breathing and feeding difficulties have been resolved, it is likely that babies and young children can be discharged home from the Children's Ward. Symptoms can persist for several weeks, so it is important to monitor their breathing and feeds whilst at home. If you have any medical concerns, contact your GP, NHS 111 or Accident & Emergency.

Feedback


We want your visit to be as comfortable as possible. Please talk to the person in charge if you have any concerns. If the ward/department staff are unable to resolve your concern, please ask for our Patient Advice and Liaison (PALS) information. Please be assured that raising a concern will not impact on your care. **Before you leave the hospital you will be asked to complete a Friends and Family Test feedback card.** Providing your feedback is vital in helping to transform NHS services and to support patient choice.

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BEHAVIOURS:

- Courtesy and respect
- Attentively kind and helpful
- Responsive communication
- Effective and professional

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The hospital can arrange for an interpreter or person to sign to assist you in communicating effectively with staff during your stay. Please let us know.

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