

Bronchiolitis



What is bronchiolitis?

Bronchiolitis is an infection of the small airways of the lungs affecting infants and young children less than 18 months of age.

How do I know if my child has bronchiolitis?

When your child develops the following symptoms followed by the development of a cold:

- Rapid breathing with a rate of over 40 breaths per minute.
- Laboured or difficulty breathing.
- Noisy breathing (may include wheezing, a high-pitched whistling sound produced when breathing out).

What causes bronchiolitis?

Bronchiolitis is caused by the narrowing of the small airways of the lungs. This narrowing may be caused by several viruses, particularly the Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV). While infants with RSV develop bronchiolitis, older children and adults may just develop cold symptoms. This virus spreads through contact with respiratory droplets from sneezing or coughing.



When can I expect my child to recover?

The symptoms may worsen over 3 to 5 days before improving. The noisy breathing may last for 1-2 weeks and the cough up to 3 weeks. Children with bronchiolitis usually do not need to be hospitalised unless they are very breathless, need oxygen or are not eating or drinking well.

What can I do for my child at home?

- **Medicine**

Your child can be given paracetamol every 4 to 6 hours, up to a maximum of 4 times a day, if the fever is above 38.0°C (follow instructions on the medicine label for the correct dosage).

- **Nasal washes for a blocked nose**

If your child's nose is blocked, he or she may not be able to breastfeed or drink from a milk bottle. Place three drops of saline in each nostril. After about 1 minute, use a soft rubber suction bulb to suck out the mucus. You can repeat this several times until your child's breathing through the nose becomes quiet and easy.

- **Feeding**

Encourage your child to drink adequate fluids. Feeding is often tiring so offer your child formula or breast milk in smaller amounts and at more frequent intervals. If your child vomits during a coughing spasm, you may try feeding the child again.

- **No Smoking**

Tobacco smoke aggravates coughing. The incidence of prolonged wheezing increases greatly in children who have an RSV infection and are exposed to passive smoking. Do not let anyone smoke around your child, especially in your home.

Should I bring my child to the Urgent Care Clinic (UCC) or Children's Emergency?

Please bring your child to UCC* if:

- Breathing is noisy or slightly faster than normal
- Your child is only eating/drinking 50% of usual intake

*UCC is a walk-in clinic in the community for children and adolescents up to 18 years old with urgent but non-life threatening conditions. It is open daily from 9am to 11pm (last registration at 9pm).

Please bring your child to the Children's Emergency immediately if:

- Breathing is laboured or difficult
- Breathing is faster than 40 breaths per minute when your child is not crying
- Your child is lethargic, refuses to eat or drink, is irritable or is unusually restless



Other Instructions

About the Khoo Teck Puat – National University Children’s Medical Institute (KTP-NUCMI)

The KTP-NUCMI is the paediatric arm of the National University Hospital and comprises the Departments of Paediatrics, Paediatric Surgery and Neonatology. We provide comprehensive and specialised medical and surgical services for newborns, children and adolescents, and are the only public hospital in Singapore that offers paediatric kidney and liver transplant programmes. Through a generous gift from the Estate of Khoo Teck Puat, we have set up an integrated outpatient facility with medical, diagnostic and rehabilitation services.

For more information about us, visit www.nuh.com.sg/ktp-nucmi.

Contact Us

24-hour Children’s Emergency

Location: NUH Main Building, Zone F, Level 1

General Enquiry: +65 6772 5000

KTP-NUCMI

Location: NUH Main Building, Zone E, Level 2

(Accessible via Kent Ridge Wing, Zone C, Level 2, Lift Lobby C)

Operating Hours: 8.30am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri), 8.30am – 12.30pm (Sat)

General Enquiry: +65 6772 5736

Appointment Line: +65 6908 2222

Email: ktpnucmi_appt@nuhs.edu.sg

9a Viva-University Children’s Cancer Centre

Location: NUH Medical Centre, Zone B, Level 9

Operating Hours: 8am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri)

Appointment Line: +65 6772 5030

Fax: +65 6872 4314

Email: cbccappt@nuhs.edu.sg

NUH Children’s Urgent Care Clinic @ Bukit Panjang

Location: Junction 10, 1 Woodlands Road, #01-22, Singapore 677899

Operating Hours: 9am – 11pm daily (including public holidays)

General Enquiry: +65 6219 1538

Email: childrenucc@nuhs.edu.sg

Website: www.nuh.com.sg/ucc

NUH Child Development Unit @ JMC

Location: Jurong Medical Centre,

60 Jurong West Central 3, Level 2, Singapore 648346

Operating Hours: 8.30am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri)

Appointment Line: +65 6665 2530/2531

Fax: +65 6665 0158

Email: cdu@nuhs.edu.sg

Website: www.nuh.com.sg/cdu

NUH Child Development Unit @ Keat Hong

Location: Keat Hong Community Club,

2 Choa Chu Kang Loop, #03-01, Singapore 689687

Operating Hours: 8.30am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri)

Appointment Line: +65 6769 4537/4637

Fax: +65 6665 0158

Email: cdu@nuhs.edu.sg

Website: www.nuh.com.sg/cdu

National University Hospital

Location: 5 Lower Kent Ridge Road, Singapore 119074

Tel: +65 6908 2222

Email: contactus@nuhs.edu.sg

Website: www.nuh.com.sg



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