

Croup

What is it?

- Inflammation of upper airways caused by a respiratory virus (para-influenza)
- Usually starts in middle of night – often accompanied by fever of 102-104
- Barky, sharp cough that usually resolves as the sun rises
- Can be accompanied by difficulty breathing, especially in children less than 3
- Often causes a sore throat, followed by cold symptoms and a looser cough, and frequently causes laryngitis, or hoarseness (uncommon with strep throat)

How to treat it?

- Controlling the inflammation and keeping the airway open is the goal of treatment
- **Cool air** helps – you can stand by the open freezer, open windows, go outside for walk, or use **cool mist humidifier** in room
- Run a hot shower to **steam up** the bathroom, then sit with your child (outside of the shower!) for 10-15 minutes at a time.
- **Ibuprofen** is a great anti-inflammatory medication. Give a full dose based on weight, even in the absence of fever

- Croup is usually bad for 2 nights so even if your child improves during the day give a prophylactic dose of ibuprofen before bed the second night as well and have the windows open and humidifier ready

When to call

- If your child is having any trouble breathing, shown by pulling in with chest muscles, looking uncomfortable when they lay flat
- Croup that lasts more than 3 nights or croup that is still very bad during daylight hours. (most symptoms subside during the daytime)