

Most babies with bronchiolitis can be cared for at home, and will get better within a week to ten days.

Go to Your Family Doctor or Hospital if:

- Your child's cough and wheeze are getting worse.

For example

- if your child's breathing becomes more difficult or is very fast.
- if your child becomes tired and listless.
- if there is any blueness around your child's lips.
- if your child looks blue or has skin that is pale and sweaty.

- Your child cannot feed normally because of the coughing or wheezing

For example

- if your child has less than half his/her normal feeds or is refusing food or drinks.
- if there are fewer wet nappies than usual.

- If you are worried in any way.

If any of the above occur seek medical advice immediately. Some babies may need to be admitted to hospital for medical treatment, such as oxygen and help with feeding.



Developed by
Children's E.D staff .
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PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET



BRONCHIOLITIS A Guide for Parents/Carers



**THE ADELAIDE & MEATH
HOSPITAL, DUBLIN**
INCORPORATING THE NATIONAL CHILDRENS
HOSPITAL

Statement of Values

**Respect - Caring - Openness -
Partnership - Teamwork
Fairness & Equality**

What is bronchiolitis?

Bronchiolitis is a common chest infection in young children, usually less than 1 year old but can sometimes occur in children up to 2 years of age. It is caused by a virus in the lungs which causes your child to have difficulty with breathing.

Signs and symptoms

The illness begins as a cold. The first symptoms your child may have are the same as a common cold. These symptoms usually last 1-2 days and can include:

- Runny nose
- Mild cough
- Stuffiness.

These symptoms are followed by an increase in problems related to breathing, such as:

- Very fast breathing
- Poor feeding
- Noisy breathing (wheezing)
- Drawing in of the chest with each breath
- Fever

Babies with bronchiolitis are usually worst on the 3rd to 5th day of the illness, and are often sick for 7-10 days. Their cough may continue for 2-4 weeks.

Medicines do not usually help babies with bronchiolitis. Bronchiolitis is caused by a virus, antibiotics are not given because they do not treat viruses.



Treatment

Babies with bronchiolitis need to rest. Taking small amounts of fluid more often will help prevent your baby becoming too tired when feeding. It will also help prevent dehydration. Breastmilk is best for babies otherwise formula can be given. Dehydration occurs when your baby does not get enough to drink. An easy way to tell if your child is not taking enough fluids is to check his/her nappies. If there are fewer wet nappies than usual, it probably means that your child is not getting enough fluid.

If your child is irritable or cranky, you can give him/her paracetamol (eg. calpol or paralink).

Bronchiolitis is an infectious disease, you should avoid contact with other babies in the first few days to help prevent infecting other children.

Ensure a smoke free environment, this will help to ease your child's breathing.