COUGHS AND NOISY BREATHING IN YOUNG BABIES

Advice from

Young babies often catch lots of coughs and colds, and their breathing can become noisy. Often, these illnesses can be managed with self-care at home.

The babies most likely to need hospital care are those under 3 months of age, those born prematurely (less than 32 weeks), and children with cystic fibrosis,

heart or muscle problems such as cerebral palsy. Please follow the advice below and

TOP TIP

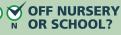
in the Little Orange Book:

When to care for your baby at home



SELF **CARE**





Occasional snorts and grunts in young babies are completely normal and nothing to worry about.

Many young babies in their first 2 - 3 months can have short episodes where they breathe faster and deeper, then more slowly and less deeply. They can pause and not take a breath for 5 to 10 seconds before starting with the deeper breaths again. This comes and goes, and if the baby is their usual colour and feeding well, it's normal.

• If you're unsure or the problem doesn't go away, call your GP or health visitor.

Impact of smoking

Children who breathe cigarette smoke are more at risk of: Coughs, colds and ear infections Asthma and asthma attacks Serious chest infections Cot death (Sudden Infant Death /SIDS)-Risk doubled Meningitis

Call 0800 022 4332 for help to quit or visit SMOKEFREE's website.

When you may need to call the GP







Bronchiolitis is a viral infection that affects babies and children up to age 2 years, usually in winter. 1 in 3 babies have had it by their first birthday.

It starts with the symptoms of a cold and a 'musical' sounding cough.

After 2-3 days, the lungs also make mucus so your baby will sound 'like a coffee machine' because their chest is full of funny rattles and wheezes which make it harder for them to feed.

If your child is unhappy with the cough and has a fever, paracetamol or ibuprofen can be given. Most bronchiolitis is MILD and your baby's breathing and reduced feeding will be much better after 5 days. Your baby may still sound 'like a coffee machine' for 3 more weeks but they will usually be happy and feeding well.

Exposure to cigarette smoke, indoors or outdoors, can make bronchiolitis worse.

When to seek urgent help from 111



CONTACT YOUR GP





Pauses in breathing that last longer than 10 seconds, and changes in colour with or without reduced feeding can be a sign of bronchiolitis or other serious illness in babies less than 3 months old. They need to be seen by a doctor within 2 hours. Call 111.



TOP TIPS

When your baby is tired and struggling to feed because of their breathing, feeding for a shorter period of time but more frequently can help them to get enough milk.



Stop passing them on! Germs spread easily. Follow these 3 easy steps to stop passing them on.



Catch it Use tissues to catch coughs and sneezes



Bin it Get rid of the tissues straight away



Kill it Wash away the germs with soap and water

When to call 999



If your child

- is struggling to breathe and breathing more than 60 breaths per minute at any age under 5 years (1 breath every second)
- has croup, and cannot breathe lying down and/or if the stridor noise is there even when your child is calm
- is grunting (an 'effort' noise with every breath in)
- has caving in of their chest with every breath
- has pauses in breathing lasting longer than 10 seconds, especially if under 3 months of age
- looks very pale and lips are blue or your child is floppy and exhausted/difficult to wake up
- is under 3 months of age and has a temperature over 38°C
- has a rash that doesn't fade with pressure

