

## Croup Symptoms

**C**roup, which is medically referred to as acute laryngotracheobronchitis, is a childhood infection that is characterized by inflammation of the windpipe and the voice box. This infection commonly affects children in the age group of 3 months to 5 years. It is categorized into viral croup and spasmodic croup. Laryngotracheitis, as the former type is known, is caused by an infection that takes several days to develop. The latter develops quickly, and may recur. When the affected child tries to cough, air that is forced through the narrowed pipes or passage causes vibration of the vocal cords. This causes a distinctive barking noise. This sound tends to be very scary for parents and children alike. However, there is nothing to worry about, if you seek medical care at the right time.



### Causes

This infection is mostly caused by the parainfluenza virus, but other viruses such as respiratory syncytial virus, rubeola virus, and influenza virus could also cause this infection. The virus is transferred through respiratory droplets that become airborne when the infected person **coughs** and sneezes. The virus can also get transmitted on touching contaminated surfaces such as tables, door knobs, etc. The infection could occur when one touches the eyes, nose or mouth, after touching the contaminated surface.

### Smoking

Smokers are prone to chronic bronchitis that does not go away so easily. The habit of smoking also causes long-standing bronchitis, that may remain for about 3 months. However, this initial period of 90 days is not the end of the bronchitis. Years of smoking can cause bronchitis to recur at regular intervals, and this may continue for at least two years.

### You Need to Give Your Child Plenty of Fluids

The affected child must rest. You need to give the child a warm moist air vaporizer to help him breathe. Steam inhalation will help open the nasal passages. Never leave your child alone in the bathroom filled with hot steam. Then, after 10 minutes you can take your child out in cool air for about 10 minutes. Make your child as comfortable as possible. If the child is crying continuously, sing him a lullaby or try to divert his attention.

### Bronchitis

Bronchitis is the inflammation of bronchi due to viral or bacterial infection. Chest pain and congestion, cough, sore throat, fever and shortness of breath are the symptoms of bronchitis. Acute bronchitis, if left untreated, can turn chronic.

### Influenza

Influenza, better known as seasonal flu, is classified as a viral infection that may also affect the bronchial tubes. The virus specifically targets the organs of the respiratory system. Hence, the person diagnosed with influenza experiences a stuffy nose, frequent bouts of dry cough, and a sore throat. Muscle aches and high fever is a common complaint among flu sufferers. Bronchitis is considered as a complication of seasonal influenza, and usually occurs in people with a weakened immune system. Bronchitis arising from seasonal flu is sudden, and usually goes away within 7-10 days.

### Pneumonia is Caused by a Number of Factors that Include:

The symptoms of pneumonitis in adults include: If left untreated it may lead to chronic pneumonitis symptoms:

- Symptoms of pneumonia in adults and children varies greatly.
- Common signs of pneumonia include:

### Pneumonitis is a Health Condition that is More of a Work Hazard

People working on farms are at risk of inhalation of aerosolized pesticides, moldy hay particles, etc. Poultry workers or people who breed birds are exposed to feathers, bird droppings and other avian organisms that leads to pneumonitis. Sometimes, patients who receive general anesthesia are at risk of inhaling gastric contents. Use of chemotherapy drugs and radiation therapy also increases the risk of developing pneumonitis. Very young children and very old people who have weak immune systems are at risk of developing pneumonia.



Cough

### Chronic Smokers and Alcoholics Develop Pneumonia

Smoking causes paralysis of cilia lining the lungs. Alcohol decreases the ability of the WBCs to fight infection. Diseases such as diabetes, heart diseases, emphysema, HIV/AIDS, increase the risk of pneumonia. Many hospitalized patients are at risk of developing hospital acquired pneumonia infection. Exposure to air pollution, toxic fumes, traumatic injury to the chest, cause mucus to accumulate in the lungs and allows bacteria to grow within the chest.

### Pneumonitis, If Left Untreated can Lead to Irreversible Lung Damage

It causes the air sacs to become rigid and stiff. This leads to pulmonary fibrosis that can cause respiratory failure, heart failure and death. Pneumonia complications depend on individual health and type of pneumonia. Pneumonia complications include bacteremia, due to bacteria finding a way into the blood stream from the lungs. It can also lead to pleural effusion where fluid accumulates around the lung membranes. Other complications include lung abscess and acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) Treatment for pneumonitis includes use of corticosteroids that helps in reliving inflammation, antibiotics to treat bacterial lung infection and oxygen therapy for those having breathing troubles.

- Patients with gastric contents in the airway will require suctioning of the airway passages.
- Treatment for pneumonia depends upon the type of pneumonia affecting the patient.
- Bacterial pneumonia requires treatment with antibiotics.
- Viral pneumonia generally requires plenty of rest and fluid intake, and a few antiviral drugs may be recommended.
- Mycoplasma infections require antibiotics for treatment.
- Antifungal medications are prescribed for those suffering from fungal pneumonia.
- Patient may be hospitalized in serious cases and given oxygen therapy, if breathing trouble develops.
- Secondly, another danger associated with whooping cough is that the paroxysm or the sudden attack of the cough can leave the baby breathless.
- It is found that whooping cough in infants and babies can be very dangerous.
- In order to avoid the side effects of paroxysm, babies are usually kept on ventilators if they contract whooping cough.
- Now, during pregnancy, the condition does not cause any noticeable side effect.
- But, if the woman suffers from whooping cough during childbirth, the baby contracts it.
- And as mentioned above, whooping cough in babies (below 1 year of age) can be very dangerous.



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