

# Croup

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School Name  
School Nurse Name  
Phone Number  
Date

Dear Parent or Guardian,

This letter is to inform you that an individual at school has been diagnosed with croup. For confidentiality purposes, no further information can be provided regarding the case but you are receiving this letter for general reference and because it's important to monitor your child closely for any symptoms of croup. Croup is a common childhood illness and most cases are mild, however, severe symptoms can cause breathing difficulties and require emergency medical treatment.

**What is croup?** Croup is a viral infection of the larynx, or voicebox. It causes swelling in the airway which leads to a barking cough and hoarse voice. Because of their already narrow airways, younger children are more susceptible to experiencing moderate to severe cases of croup.

**What are other possible symptoms?** In addition to the barking cough and hoarse voice, croup can also be associated with sore throat, nasal congestion, and fever. In some cases, children can develop stridor, a high pitched, "whistling" sound upon inhalation. The hallmark, "croupy cough," is tight, low-pitched, and resembles a seal's bark.

**How is it treated?** If you suspect your child may have croup, contact their pediatrician to determine whether your child will need to be seen and to discuss treatment. Many symptoms of croup can be treated at home by using a cool mist humidifier, steam from the shower, drinking plenty of fluids, and monitoring closely at night when symptoms are typically worse. With proper treatment and rest, most symptoms of croup will resolve in 3–7 days.

**What are the risks?** Severe symptoms of croup including difficulty breathing, stridor, or ribs pulling in with each breath (called retractions) require prompt evaluation. Some children with croup will require breathing treatments and medical observation.

**How does it spread?** Croup is spread by direct contact with respiratory secretions of infected persons or contaminated surfaces. Infection occurs through the eyes, mouth, or nose, and can also spread through droplets from a sneeze or cough.

**How long should children with croup stay away from school?** Children with croup can return to school when they feel well enough to do so and meet other exclusion criteria (including fever criteria).

**What should you do now?** Monitor your child closely for symptoms and contact your pediatrician and school nurse if you suspect an infection. To help prevent spread, encourage good hand washing habits, disinfect surfaces, discourage sharing of food and beverages, and teach appropriate sneeze and cough hygiene to your child.

Thank you for your careful attention to the information in this notice and for your diligence in helping to keep our school community as safe and healthy as possible. Please don't hesitate to reach out to the school nurse with any additional questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

School Nurse Name