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## Bronchiolitis - discharge

Your child has bronchiolitis, which causes swelling and mucus to build up in the smallest air passages of the lungs. In the hospital, the doctors and nurses helped your child breathe better. They also made sure your child received enough fluids.

### What to Expect at Home

Your child will likely still have symptoms of bronchiolitis after leaving the hospital.

- Wheezing may last for up to 5 days.
- Coughing and stuffy nose will slowly get better over 7 to 14 days.
- Sleeping and eating may take up to 1 week to return to normal.
- You may need to take time off work to care for your child.

### Home Care

Breathing moist (wet) air helps loosen the sticky mucus that may be choking your child. You can use a humidifier to make the air moist. Follow the directions that came with the humidifier.

Do not use steam vaporizers because they can cause burns. Use cool mist humidifiers instead.

If your child's nose is stuffy, your child will not be able to drink or sleep easily. You can use warm tap water or saline nose drops to loosen the mucus. Both of these work better than any medicine you can buy.

- Place 3 drops of warm water or saline in each nostril.
- Wait 1 minute, then use a soft rubber suction bulb to suck out the mucus from each nostril.
- Repeat several times until your child is able to breathe through the nose quietly and easily.

Everyone who touches your child must wash their hands with warm water and soap or an alcohol-based hand cleanser before doing so. Try to keep other children away from your child.

Do not let anyone smoke in the house, car, or anywhere near your child.

## Eating and Drinking

It is very important for your child to drink enough fluids.

- Offer breast milk or formula if your child is younger than 12 months.
- Offer regular milk if your child is older than 12 months.

Eating or drinking may make your child tired. Feed small amounts, but more often than usual.

If your child throws up because of coughing, wait a few minutes and try to feed your child again.

## Medicines

Some asthma medicines help children with bronchiolitis. Your health care provider may prescribe such medicine for your child.

Do not give your child decongestant nose drops, antihistamines, or any other cold medicines unless your child's doctor tells you to.

## When to Call the Doctor

Call the doctor if your child has any of the following:

- Hard time breathing
- Chest muscles are pulling in with each breath
- Breathing faster than 50 to 60 breaths per minute (when not crying)
- Making a grunting noise
- Sitting with shoulders hunched over
- Wheezing becomes more intense
- Skin, nails, gums, lips, or area around the eyes is bluish or grayish
- Extremely tired
- Not moving around very much
- Limp or floppy body
- Nostrils are flaring out when breathing

## References

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