

An essential guide to bronchiolitis

How do you know when it's More Than a Cold?

Most babies experience coughs and sniffles but sometimes it may be more than a cold

What is bronchiolitis?



- Bronchiolitis is a contagious infection that affects babies and young children
- Bronchiolitis is caused by an inflammation of the bronchioles, which are small airways in the lungs. This restricts the amount of air that can enter the lungs, making it more difficult for the child to breathe¹
- Approximately 30,000 children in Britain are admitted to hospital with respiratory syncytial virus, which causes bronchiolitis, every year - making it the most common cause of admission during infancy²
- It is estimated that one in three babies in the UK develops bronchiolitis in the first year of their life¹

Who is at risk?

- Bronchiolitis generally affects babies and young children under two years old³
- Premature babies (born before 37 weeks of pregnancy) and/or those born with a heart or lung condition are most at risk from developing severe cases of bronchiolitis³

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of bronchiolitis can include: a blocked or runny nose, a cough, a slightly high temperature (fever), a rasping and persistent dry cough, rapid or noisy breathing (wheezing), brief pauses in breathing, feeding less and having fewer wet nappies, vomiting after feeding and being irritable.⁴

Most children with bronchiolitis have mild symptoms.⁴ The majority of cases of bronchiolitis do not require medical treatment; children can be looked after at home and will get better within two to three weeks.³

However, it is important to look out for signs of more serious problems, such as breathing difficulties.⁴ If you are concerned about the health of your little one, please seek the advice of a healthcare professional. It's particularly important to seek medical advice if your baby is under 12 weeks old, or if they have an underlying health condition, such as a congenital (present from birth) heart or lung condition.⁴



Reducing the risk of bronchiolitis

The virus that causes bronchiolitis is very common and easily spread, so it's impossible to completely prevent it.⁵ However good hygiene, such as hand washing, covering a child's nose and mouth when they cough or sneeze and using disposable tissues, may help prevent the virus being passed on.⁵

If a child falls in to one of the high-risk categories and is more at risk of developing severe bronchiolitis there may be additional preventative measures available.⁵ Please speak to your healthcare professional about preventing and managing bronchiolitis.

For more information about bronchiolitis visit
www.morethanacold.co.uk

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References

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3. NHS. Bronchiolitis overview. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/bronchiolitis/> [Last accessed December 2019]
4. NHS. Bronchiolitis symptoms. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/bronchiolitis/symptoms/> [Last accessed December 2019]
5. NHS. Bronchiolitis prevention. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/bronchiolitis/prevention/> [Last accessed December 2019]

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