

# Bronchiolitis

## What is bronchiolitis?

Bronchiolitis is a common viral chest infection which affects babies up to 12 months of age. The illness can last for seven to ten days, with it being most severe on the second or third day. The cough that children have with bronchiolitis can continue for two to four weeks.

## Symptoms of bronchiolitis

Bronchiolitis often begins as a normal cold with a runny nose, cough and congestion. Bronchiolitis then develops with:

- Fast, noisy breathing
- Poor feeding
- Fever

## Treatment of bronchiolitis

The treatment process differs for each patient with bronchiolitis. If your child has difficulty breathing then they may need to be observed in hospital with additional oxygen and hydration fluids if needed. Children admitted to hospital with bronchiolitis do not usually require medications.

## If hospitalised

### Admission

The admission process is an opportunity to discuss your child's hospital stay and any special needs they may have while in hospital or for going home.

### Visiting hours

The Cabrini Paediatric Ward does not have set visiting hours.

### Discharge

Your child will be discharged when your doctor is happy with their progress and condition and you are confident with caring for them at home.

Please report to the reception desk in the foyer of the hospital before leaving to finalise any administrative paperwork.

## Care at home

- It is important for your child to rest at home after leaving hospital. Breathing is more difficult when your child is upset.
- Give your child smaller, yet more frequent feeds (breastfeed/formula/water). This lessens the chance of your child tiring and reduces the risk of dehydration.
- Keep your child away from other babies in the first few days of the illness as bronchiolitis is infectious
- Ensure your child remains in a smoke-free environment to assist with their breathing and recovery

## Follow-up

Please contact your doctor's rooms to organise a follow-up appointment.

## When to contact your doctor

- Any difficulty with breathing
- Worsening symptoms of noisy breathing or coughing
- Reduced feeding and reduced wet nappies
- Persistent temperature of 38.5°C or higher

## Questions

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact the Ward using the phone number below.