

**GREENWICH CENTRAL SCHOOL  
HEALTH OFFICES**

**CROUP**

Croup is an acute viral inflammation of the upper and lower respiratory tracts, characterized by inspiratory stridor, subglottic swelling, and respiratory distress that is most pronounced on inspiration.

Croup is spread in most cases by airborne route or by contact with infected secretions. It is primarily a disease of children 6 months to 3 years, though it may occasionally occur earlier or later. Seasonal outbreaks are common.

The infection produces inflammation of the larynx, trachea, bronchi, bronchioles and lung parenchyma (the frame work of the lungs) however it is most pronounced in the subglottic region, causing swelling, inflammation, and obstruction.

The tell tale sign of croup is the “barking” cough, often spasmodic, most commonly at night. Respiratory distress, increased respiratory rate and harsh inspiratory stridor are the obvious signs. Fever is present in approximately half the children. The child’s condition may appear to improve in the morning, but worsens again at night. The illness usually last 3-4 days.

The mildly ill child may be cared for at home. Keep him/her comfortable, and well hydrated. Rest is important, as fatigue and crying may aggravate the condition. Home humidification devices (vaporizers, steam from enclosed bathroom) may help alleviate, the cough, however, it will only help to mobilize, secretions minimally

Increased, or persistent difficulty breathing, marked fatigue, or dehydration indicates the need for hospitalization.

If your child is diagnosed with croup please notify the health office immediately, so that I may tract the illness and notify other parents.