

# Natural Help 4...

## Croup



### What is Croup?

**Croup** is a common viral infection that affects children between the ages of 6 months and three years. The **virus causes the vocal chords to swell** and results in a “**barking cough**” and a deep chesty noise when inhaling. Because the virus affects the vocal chords which are the narrowest part of the airways, the constriction may cause difficulties breathing.

### What causes Croup?

**Croup** is a common infection that is a result of one of the cold viruses – causing the **larynx and trachea to swell**. It can last up to 6 days and is most common in winter or fall. **Croup** may affect children under 3 more severely and tends to be worse at night.

Most cases of **croup** are mild and can be treated at home, if your child’s symptoms don’t seem to be improving, call your doctor – they may prescribe drugs to open your child’s airways. If you are unsure as to whether your child has **croup** – consult your physician.

### How is Croup diagnosed?

The most common **symptoms of croup** include: fever, hoarseness and a barking, **hacking cough**. It may also cause a stridor (crowing noise) when the child breathes in.

Watch your child closely. If he or she shows the following signs – or if you are worried – consult your doctor immediately:

- Drooling or has trouble swallowing.
- Skin is blue or turns darker.
- Breathing doesn’t sound better after mist treatment.
- Cranky or uncomfortable.
- Becomes more difficult and upset

### Help and treatment for Croup

If your child seems to have a **mild attack of croup**, try the ‘mist treatment’. You can do this at home: Place a warm wet washcloth over your child’s nose and mouth and have them breath through it. Run hot water in your shower, with the bathroom door and windows closed until the room is fogged up with steam. Once the room is full of steam, sit in the humidity with your child for 10 minutes. In

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cooler months, taking your child outside for a few minutes may help too.

Your doctor may prescribe OTC decongestant medicines or medication to treat a fever, however generally [cough](#) medications are not recommended. They can have **upsetting side effects** such as irritability, restlessness, insomnia, or drowsiness depending on which is used. Some medications can also dry out mucus membranes, leaving children vulnerable to secondary conditions.

When it comes to **respiratory complaints** natural herbal and homeopathic remedies have long been regarded as effective medications – safe enough for children. Homeopathic ingredients work to address the acute symptoms: Kali. mur is beneficial for bronchial complaints while Mag phos. is nature’s anti-spasmodic and relaxant.

Rumex crispus is particularly effective when **addressing coughs brought about by temperature changes** in the air. Homeopathic remedies are advantageous when treating children as they have no side effects and cannot be habit-forming or addictive.

## Tips for Croup

- **Hydrate.** Make sure that your child gets plenty of rest and plenty to drink. When your child has a [croupy cough](#), it is very important to increase the amount of liquids that he or she drinks.
- **Night Comfort.** At night, run a cool-mist vaporizer to keep the air from being too dry. Another tip is to elevate the head of the bed that can make your child more comfortable.
- **Never give aspirin.** If your child has a fever, give a safe medication, but never aspirin – as it has been associated with the development of a rare condition known as Reye’s syndrome.

## The Natural Approach

While Western medicine has become the norm in many cultures, it is not the only treatment option. Conventional western medicine, often called allopathic medicine, is the system of medicine taught at most medical schools and most pharmaceutical and synthetic medicines are manufactured and marketed according to the principles of allopathic medicine. Allopathic medicine is also sometimes called orthodox medicine.

Because most of us in the Western world have grown up in a society in which allopathic medicine is the prevailing norm, we forget that, only a few decades ago, homeopathic, herbal and other natural medicines were commonly available – and freely used even by conventional doctors. While there are often heated debates about which system of medicine is ‘better’ than the other, many responsible doctors (whether they are allopathic or not) recognize that both have a role to play in the treatment program.

Natural medicine has often been frowned on by conventional doctors, especially by those who did not have sufficient knowledge of these medicines. However, it is encouraging to note that some medical schools are now beginning to re-introduce it into their course work, thereby providing doctors with a wider range of treatment options from which to choose. In many countries, especially in Europe,



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### Michele Carelse, Clinical Psychologist



All of our natural remedies are formulated by our expert team of herbalists, naturopaths and homeopaths, and headed by Michele Carelse.

Michele has had years of experience in the manufacturing and use of natural remedies. In addition, she is a trained Clinical Psychologist and has been incorporating natural remedies into her treatment of patients with depression, anxiety, ADD, ADHD and stress for many years with spectacular results.

India and China, natural and homeopathic medicines are commonly prescribed by conventional doctors and represent a significant part of the total annual drug sales.

Naturopathy is a branch of medicine (just as allopathy is a branch of medicine) which operates according to the underlying philosophy that the body has an innate capacity to heal itself. While natural medicines are often called 'alternative' or 'complimentary' medicines, they are, in fact, a unique and independent form of medicine in their own right, well able to treat a variety of conditions. Perhaps the term 'holistic' medicine is more apt, given the broad range of treatment options and approaches which are to be found within the practice of natural medicine, which encompasses many different disciplines, including herbalism, homeopathy, iridology, osteopathy, chiropractic, therapeutic massage techniques, aromatherapy, acupuncture and many, many more.

Most naturopaths will use a variety of treatment modalities in order to treat their patients in a holistic way to support health, relieve symptoms and prevent future disease. In fact, even the World Health Organization defines health as being "... more than simply the absence of illness. It is the active state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being." This is a wonderfully clear description of holistic or natural medicine, which strives to support health (thereby relieving or preventing symptoms), rather than simply eliminating disease.

Although allopathic medicine certainly has a role to play and has made a tremendous contribution to medical science during the past century, there is a growing perception that it is not the only answer and that, in many cases, holistic medicine can accomplish just as much, if not more – without the risk of side effects, addiction and sacrifice to health so commonly associated with pharmaceutical drugs. Contrary to common perception, and provided that they are manufactured in the correct way, natural medicines can work quickly and safely to promote healing.

In many cases, they can succeed where pharmaceutical drugs have failed. Despite frequent reports that they are 'unproven' and 'untested', the opposite is true. Natural medicines have a long history of usage and there is a wealth of empirical evidence to support their effectiveness and safety. In addition, active clinical research is carried out by many academic hospitals and universities to support the extensive traditional and empirical evidence behind natural medicines.

It is also important to know that, like any medicine, herbal and homeopathic medicines must be manufactured in the correct way, following acceptable procedures and manufacturing methods to ensure maximum effectiveness and safety. Due to the recent rise in popularity of natural remedies, many companies have sprung up to take advantage of the market. Unfortunately not all of them are equipped to manufacture to the correct standards, often resulting in a flood of inferior (and sometimes even unsafe) remedies onto the market – and giving natural remedies a bad name.

Even some pharmaceutical companies have rushed to claim their market share by producing so-called 'standardized' extracts of herbs and offering these as superior to the tried and tested methods of naturopathic manufacturing. Nothing could be further from the truth. While 'standardized' extracts may offer benefit of easy consistency of dosage (and cheaper more efficient production lines), they have grave disadvantages. These include an increase in side effects as the medicines produced in this manner lose the natural protective properties of the herbs. In some cases, these side effects have proved fatal – as was seen in the liver toxicity

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associated with standardized extracts of kava kava, a herb previously safely used for generations without any known side effects.

Most naturopaths recommend what is called the Full Spectrum Method of extraction – which retains the benefits of ALL the active ingredients within the herb as opposed to isolating only one – thereby providing a more complete treatment as well as superior protection against side effects.

Whatever your choice, always choose wisely. Research what is best for you. If you have a chronic or life threatening condition, don't make changes without first discussing them with your doctor in order that your condition may be monitored. Well informed and supportive practitioners will support patients who want to take responsibility for their own health.

## **Related Natural Remedies:**

**CroupEx Sprinkles:** Homeopathic remedy temporarily relieves croup and barking cough in babies and children

**CroupEx Sprinkles** is a safe, non-addictive FDA registered natural remedy, containing *100% homeopathic ingredients* especially selected to temporarily relieve chest congestion and barking cough in babies and children.

Soothing a child with croup is difficult. Children often become irritable, clingy, and won't eat or sleep when they have croup cough. CroupEx Sprinkles helps to **decrease short-term irritability and discomfort**.

This remedy should be taken at the first signs of a barking or hoarse cough associated with croup to address the symptoms. CroupEx Sprinkles provides temporary relief by **decreasing inflammation and encouraging open airways**.

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