



Emergency Department

**Viral Induced Wheeze**

Information for Parents/ Carers

**Introduction****What is viral induced wheeze?**

Some children cough, wheeze, get breathless or have a rattly chest during or after a cold. A wheezy episode during or after a cold is called viral induced wheeze. It does not mean that your child has asthma.

Children with viral induced wheeze may:

- \* Have a runny nose or a raised temperature.
- \* Have a cough for a long time (may last several weeks)
- \* Vomit their feeds
- \* Become too tired or breathless to take their normal feeds (may last several days)

Most children recover quite quickly and don't need any medical treatment.

**What can I do to help my child?**

- \* Your child will need rest (disturb them as little as possible).
- \* Keep an eye on their breathing to check it doesn't get worse.
- \* Offer small amounts of feed at regular intervals.
- \* Raise the head of the cot slightly to help your child's breathing.
- \* Give Paracetamol, if they have a raised temperature. Do not exceed the recommended dose for your child's age.

**When should I seek help urgently?**

- See Traffic Light Chart below

**Is there any treatment that can be given?**

An inhaler may help, but only for some children who are older than 6-12 months of age. Your doctor will check your child's symptoms to see if an inhaler is right for them.

If you are given an inhaler, this will contain Salbutamol, which may help with their breathing. Use the inhaler with the 'spacer' provided. Your doctor or nurse will show you how to do this.

**Care of your spacer device**

Clean your 'Volumatic' spacer regularly to the manufacturer's recommendations

## What if my child gets worse and the inhaler is not helping?

<p><b>RED</b></p>	<p>If your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is too breathless to talk / eat or drink</li> <li>• Has blue lips</li> <li>• Has symptoms of cough/wheeze or breathlessness which is getting worse despite 10 puffs blue (salbutamol) inhaler every 4 hours</li> <li>• Is confused and drowsy OR excessively tired and pale</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ring 999 immediately for help. Give 10 puffs of blue (salbutamol) reliever inhaler via their spacer device every 10 minutes until ambulance arrives.</b></p> <p>Keep child in upright position and reassure them.</p>
<p><b>AMBER</b></p>	<p>If your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is wheezy and breathless and the blue (salbutamol) reliever inhaler 5 puffs is not lasting for 4 hours</li> <li>• Is having a cough or wheeze/tight chest during the day <u>and</u> night</li> <li>• Is too breathless to run / play / or do any of their normal activities</li> </ul>	<p><b>Immediately contact your GP or call NHS 111 and make an appointment for your child to be seen that day face to face.</b></p> <p>Increase blue (salbutamol) reliever inhaler to 5-10 puffs every 4 hours.</p> <p>If symptoms persist for 4 hours or more and you have not been able to speak to either a member of staff from your GP practice or to NHS 111 staff, recheck that your child has not developed any <b>red</b> features.</p>
<p><b>GREEN</b></p>	<p>If your child starts to cough, wheeze or has a tight chest but can continue their day to day activities</p> <p>*Children and young people who are unwell and have a high temperature should stay at home. They can go back to school, college or childcare when they no longer have a high temperature, and they are well enough to attend.</p>	<p><b>Give 2-5 puffs blue (salbutamol) reliever inhaler every 4 hours until symptoms improve.</b></p> <p>If you are still worried, please see your local pharmacist, GP or call NHS 111 (telephone 111)</p>

This leaflet only gives general information. You must always discuss the individual treatment of your child with the appropriate member of staff. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information

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