Croup (Laryngotracheobronchitis)

Croup is a general term that describes a group of conditions characterized by edema and inflammation of the upper airway. The focus of this Picmonic is on the most common croup disorder - laryngotracheobronchitis, often abbreviated as LTB, which often leads to hospitalization. The other group disorders are acute epiglottitis, acute spasmodic laryngitis, and acute tracheitis.



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Mechanism

Parainfluenza Virus
Parachuting-flute Virus
This is the most common cause of croup, but inflammation of these airways is also caused by adenovirus, RSV, influenza A&B, and mycoplasma pneumoniae.

Assessment

3 Months to 3 Years
(3) Tree Month-moon to (3) Tree Year-calendar
The age of onset of this disorder is after 3 months of age but usually before 3 years.

Nighttime
Night-sky
Symptoms usually present with a sudden onset and at night.

Barking Seal Cough
Seal with Coughing Coffee-pot
Croup is classically identified by a loud seal-like barking cough due to inflammation of all of the airways.

Inspiratory Stridor
Inspiring Spider
Constriction of the airways due to inflammation causes decreased airway diameter. This causes a loud high pitched inspiratory stridor. Children without stridor are often treated at home.

Interventions

Cool Humidified Air
Cold Air from Humidifier
Treatments are aimed at decreasing inflammation and cool humidified air has long been used as a treatment, although its effectiveness has not been completely scientifically documented.

Dexamethasone
Desk-moth
Steroid medications like dexamethasone are given to decrease inflammatory processes of tissues in the body as treatments are aimed to decrease inflammation.

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Racemic Epinephrine

Race-car Epi-pen

A specialized type of epinephrine named for its chemical properties is given in an aerosolized form. This medication is indicated for stridor or airway constriction due to inflammation, except epiglottis.

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