

Viral Induced Wheeze in Children

What is a viral induced wheeze?

In viral induced wheeze the chest becomes wheezy and feels tight when the child has a viral infection (a cold, cough or chest infection). The small airways in the lungs become irritated and inflamed causing them to swell and narrow.

Viral induced wheeze is common, affecting nearly a third of all children. It is more likely if your child was born early, ever had bronchiolitis, or is exposed to cigarette smoke.

Does this mean my child has asthma?

Although the symptoms are similar to asthma, viral wheeze is a different condition. It usually gets better after 4 or 5 days once the cold clears up. Between colds children do not usually have a wheeze even when they are exercising. They will often stop getting viral induced wheeze as they grow older and their airways become larger. Children with asthma often have a family history of asthma, eczema, hayfever or allergies

What treatment will my child need?

Your child may be given a reliever inhaler to be given using a spacer device. The medicine relaxes the muscle around the airways making it easier for your child to breathe. Antibiotics are not useful against viruses so will not be helpful in treating viral induced wheeze. Steroids are also not usually helpful in this condition.

If you are given a reliever inhaler it should be given regularly over the first few days:

6-10 puffs every 4 hours on day 1

4-6 puffs every 4 hours on days 2 and 3

2-4 puffs every 6-8 hours on days 4 and 5

It is an emergency if your child is breathing very fast and using their neck or tummy muscles to breathe, is too breathless to talk, eat or drink, or looks tired, pale or blue around the lips.

Seek help immediately by dialling 999

Patient Experience

We know that being admitted to hospital can be a difficult and unsettling time for you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with a member of staff on the ward or in the relevant department who will do their best to answer your questions and reassure you.

Feedback

Feedback is really important and useful to us – it can tell us where we are working well and where improvements can be made. There are lots of ways you can share your experience with us including completing our Friends and Family Test – cards are available and can be posted on all wards, departments and clinics at our hospitals. We value your comments and feedback and thank you for taking the time to share this with us.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

If you have any concerns or questions about your care, we advise you to talk with the nurse in charge or the department manager in the first instance as they are best placed to answer any questions or resolve concerns quickly. If the relevant member of staff is unable to help resolve your concern, you can contact the PALS Team. We offer informal help, advice or support about any aspect of hospital services & experiences.

Our PALS team will liaise with the various departments in our hospitals on your behalf, if you feel unable to do so, to resolve your problems and where appropriate refer to outside help.

If you are still unhappy you can contact the Complaints Department, who can investigate your concerns. You can make a complaint orally, electronically or in writing and we can advise and guide you through the complaints procedure.

How to contact PALS:

Telephone Patient Services: 0300 123 1732 or via email at: wah-tr.PALS@nhs.net

Opening times:

The PALS telephone lines are open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 4.00pm. Please be aware that you may need to leave a voicemail message, but we aim to return your call within one working day. If you are unable to understand this leaflet, please communicate with a member of staff.

For additional medical advice, if your symptoms or condition worsens:

Contact your GP

NHS 111:

Get help with your symptoms, NHS111:
Information to help you manage your health:

Telephone 111

<https://111.nhs.uk/>
www.nhs.uk

In an emergency telephone 999

Emergency Department (A&E)
Alexandra Hospital
Woodrow Drive
Redditch B98 7UB

Tel: 01527 512030

Minor Injury Unit
Kidderminster Hospital
Bewdley Road
Kidderminster DY11 6RJ

Tel: 01562 513039

Emergency Department (A&E)
Worcestershire Royal Hospital
Charles Hastings Way
Worcester WR5 1DD

Tel: 01905 760743