

Information for parents/families about respiratory virus surge in children

During the pandemic young children have not been exposed as often to the usual viral illnesses that they would normally develop immunity to. We are therefore expecting more than the usual numbers of viruses in children particularly in the 0-5 age range in the coming months. One of the common viruses causes a condition called bronchiolitis which is a common childhood condition that we expect to be even more common this year and to place increased demand on local NHS services. A cough and/or shortness of breath might mean bronchiolitis.

Bronchiolitis is usually a mild disease causing a cough but some children can become very unwell. The condition is not expected to be any more serious than usual. Because of the numbers of children that may be affected we are taking this opportunity to circulate material to parents to give advice and confidence on managing a poorly child and to help highlight if your child needs more immediate medical attention. Most children will only be mildly unwell.

We have attached three documents to assist you, but always trust your instincts and call for help if you are not sure:

1. Local guidance with contacts to help you know when to seek advice
2. National guidance for under 1s
3. National guidance for over 1s

National guidance is from the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health. It is kept up to date and available from:

<https://what0-18.nhs.uk/parentscarers/worried-your-child-unwell>

We do hope that you find this information useful and would appreciate if you could share this information with your parents.

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