The guidelines have been made by a working group with staff from departments of paediatrics in Herning, Randers, Skejby and Viborg.

The intention with the guidelines is to provide parents with advice across the following sectors: health visitors, general practitioners (family doctors), doctors on call, and the staff at paediatric departments.

You can see and download the parent guidelines at the following homepage: www.rm.dk/via53376.html

You can order additional copies from Rikke Dalsgaard at the Regional Health Office, the Central Denmark Region, Skottenborg 28, 8800 Viborg. Rikke.Dalsgaard@stab.rm.dk

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### General:
False croup is often a symptom of a virus infection in the upper airways with a swelling around the vocal chords and mucosa of the throat. The most typical symptom is a cough which sounds like the bark of a sea lion. The condition is most common in children between the age of 6 months to 5 years. If a child has had false croup before, it tends to come back when the child catches a new cold. After the age of 4-5 years, the symptoms become milder. As a rule, false croup is a mild disease lasting 3-4 days; the coughing can last longer. False croup often gets worse at night when the child is laying down in bed, and gets better during the day.

### How is it contracted?
The virus spreads via mucus, snot and spit, and infects through breathing in small droplets, e.g. when sneezing, and/or by hands, or toys contaminated with snot, mucus or spit.

### Symptoms:
- Often appears after a few hours of sleep
- The child has difficulty breathing and it can be squaky or wheezing
- The cough sounds like the bark of a sea lion
- Hoarse voice
- Sometimes the child can have a fever
- The child can become restless and anxious
- In rare cases, the face and nails turn pale or have a bluish colour.

### Good advice:
- Your child can breathe more easily if sitting up or the head is elevated
- Take the child outside if the air is dry and cold
- Offer the child plenty to drink, preferably something cold; maybe ice
- Avoid large meals as coughing can make the child vomit
- In case of fever - make sure the child is not too hot or is covered by a warm duvet
- Air out the room often
- Avoid exposing the child to passive smoking. Tobacco smoke increases and maintains the risk of irritation of the airways and increases the frequency of infections.

### When to see a doctor:
Contact a doctor if the child:
- seems apathetic and gets more tired
- turns blue around the mouth, nose and nails
- has difficulty breathing
- refuses to drink and drools a lot
- worries you and you feel insecure

Contact your general practitioner first because he/she knows your child better than the doctor on call. You can also get good advice and guidance from the health visitor.

### Treatment:
Since false croup is a virus infection, it cannot be treated with antibiotics. You can give the child pain relieving medication as agreed with a doctor. In severe cases of false croup, the child will be admitted to hospital for observation, and the symptoms can maybe be relieved with medicine.

### Daycare:
The child can go back to daycare when it can play without having difficulties breathing.