Date

Dear Parent or Guardian:

We have learned that a child in our care has been diagnosed with **croup**. We are providing this general information about croup. Please consult with your child’s healthcare provider if you have further questions or concerns about this condition.

**What are the symptoms of a croup?**

Croup is caused primarily by a virus. Symptoms include a cough that is tight, low-pitched, and barky (like a barking seal). The voice or cry may be hoarse (laryngitis) and the child may make a harsh, raspy sound when breathing in (stridor). Loud or continuous stridor noises may indicate severe croup. Croup usually lasts 5–6 days and is often worse at night.

**How is croup spread?**

Like a cold, croup is easily spread through the air by coughing or sneezing. Surfaces and hands contaminated with mucus or saliva may also spread croup.

**How is a croup treated?**

Parents should always consult with their child’s healthcare provider for treatment recommendations. Using a humidifier, managing fevers, and avoiding tobacco smoke are recommended. Providing extra comfort is helpful because crying and agitation make breathing more difficult.

**How do you control the spread?**

* Wash hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and warm water. Antibacterial soap is not necessary.
* Teach children to cover their noses and mouths with a tissue or their arm when coughing or sneezing.
* Wash hands well afterward using a tissue.
* Avoid touching the eyes, mouth, or nose.
* Clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces.
* Exclusion of children with croup from school and childcare is generally not necessary.
* If the child is too sick to take part in normal activities, they should be kept at home.

**How do I get more information?**

For more information about croup, contact your healthcare provider.