



## Wheezing in Children



### Overview

Wheezing is a problem with the airways. It's a high-pitched whistling sound you can hear when your child breathes. Or, it may be so quiet that a doctor needs a stethoscope to hear it. Wheezing can be scary for parents.

### Causes

What causes wheezing in children? Often, it's linked to a common cold or other respiratory infection. Some infections cause the airways to become inflamed and narrowed. Wheezing is also a common symptom of asthma. Some children wheeze because of a problem with the structure of their lungs or vocal cords. And, a child may wheeze after a choking episode.

### When to call a doctor

Should you call a doctor? Although some minor wheezing may not be a problem, watch closely for warning signs. Is your child breathing harder or faster than normal? Are their nostrils flaring? Are the muscles of their neck or ribs contracting as they struggle to breathe? Are they making grunting noises? Are their lips turning blue? And, do you feel like something just isn't right? These are signs of a medical emergency. Call the doctor immediately.

### Treatment

Treatment depends on what's causing the wheezing. Your doctor will find out what's wrong and create a care plan that's right for you.