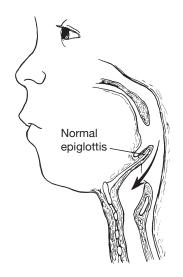
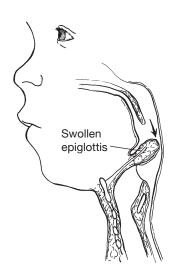
# Let's Talk ABOUT...



## **Epiglottitis**



Epiglottitis (ep-i-glaw-TIGHT-es) is the swelling of the epiglottis (ep-i-GLAW-tes). The epiglottis is a tongue-like flap of tissue that covers the opening to the trachea (windpipe). Epiglottitis is dangerous because a swollen epiglottis can make it difficult or impossible to breathe.

Epiglottitis may occur any time of the year, but it often happens in winter and spring. Children of all ages as well as adults, can be affected. A bacteria called Hib is often the cause of this infection. Thanks to the Hib vaccine, epiglottitis has become very uncommon.

#### What happens?

You may have noticed your child showing one or more of these signs and symptoms before coming to the hospital:

- a fever greater than 102°F
- trouble breathing
- wanting to sit up rather than lie down
- a very sore throat
- a soft voice

- drooling
- refusing to eat

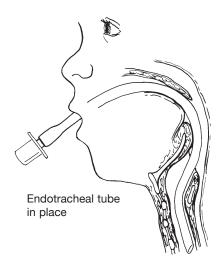
### How do you treat epiglottitis?

Treatment will be immediate. The goal is to keep your child calm and open the airway from the mouth to the lungs. To do this, a tube will be placed through your child's mouth into the windpipe. This procedure is called **intubation** (see picture on back).

Your child will be admitted to the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) for continued treatment.

To fight the infection and keep your child calm, antibiotics and other medicines will be given until the swelling goes away. The swelling is usually gone in 12 to 72 hours.

Antibiotics are given for 10 days. They may be given by IV (through a tiny tube into the vein). Once the swelling has gone down and the breathing tube is removed, the antibiotics can be taken by mouth. Your child will then be moved out of PICU to a different unit or home to finish the antibiotics. It is very important that all the antibiotics are taken.



#### How do you prevent epiglottitis?

Children of certain ages should receive the Hib vaccine to lessen the chance of getting epiglottitis. See your doctor to know whether your child needs this vaccine. Family members may need preventive treatment as well. Please talk about this with your family doctor.



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