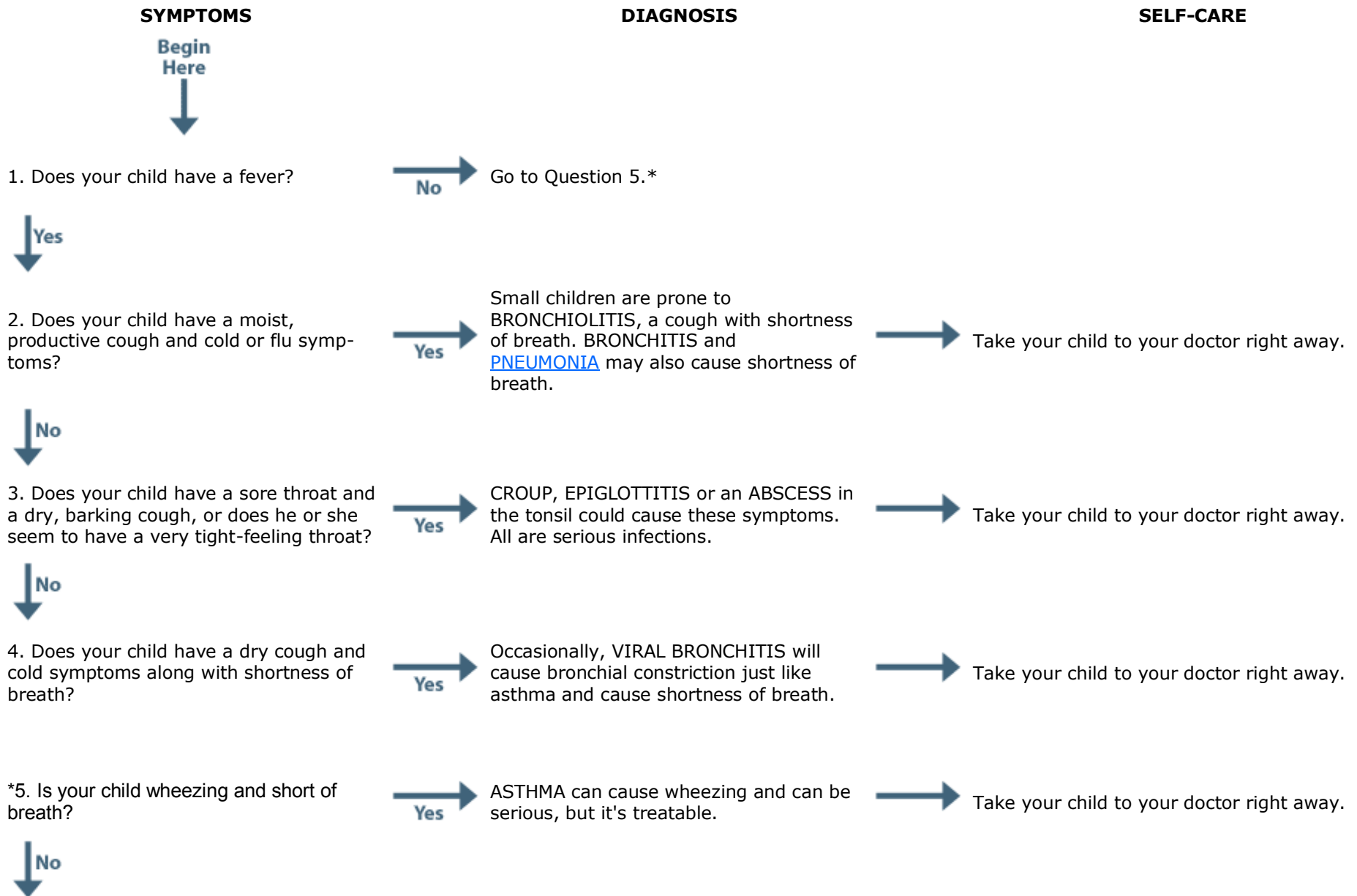


Shortness of Breath in a Child or Infant

Shortness of breath is a very serious symptom in children and should never be ignored. Knowing a doctor has diagnosed and is treating the problem should bring comfort, but if symptoms become worse, always call your child's doctor right away or go to the emergency room. This chart describes some common causes of shortness of breath in children. Take your child to your doctor right away.



6. Does your child seem to be short of breath after he or she swallowed or choked on a toy, coin or other object?

Yes →

Any small object can block an airway and cause shortness of breath or CHOKING.

→

Take your child to your doctor right away. Watch your child closely and allow him or her to cough (this may remove the object). If necessary, carefully clear the airway with a sweeping motion of your finger. If your child is choking, perform the HEIMLICH MANEUVER immediately, then call 911.

↓ No

7. Does your baby ever have times during sleep when he or she seems to stop breathing?

Yes →

Short episodes of not breathing may be normal, while longer episodes may be a warning sign of [SUDDEN INFANT DEATH SYNDROME \(SIDS\)](#).

→

Take your child to your doctor right away.

↓ No

For more information, please talk to your doctor. If you think the problem is serious, call your doctor right away.

This tool has been reviewed by doctors and is for general educational purposes only. It is not a substitute for medical advice. The information in this tool should not be relied upon to make decisions about your health. Always consult your family doctor with questions about your individual condition(s) and/or circumstances. Source: American Academy of Family Physicians. Family Health & Medical Guide. Dallas: Word Publishing; 1996.