COVID-19 Information for Parents – My child may have been exposed to COVID

We're still learning about coronavirus (COVID-19). Far fewer cases of the virus have been reported in children, and it seems to usually cause a milder infection in them than in adults and older people. But some kids have developed more serious symptoms. Many parents wonder what to do if their child gets sick. Here's what you need to know.

What Are the Signs & Symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19)?

Coronavirus can cause:

- a fever
- a cough
- sore throat
- fast breathing
- chills
- shaking with chills
- muscle pain
- headache
- a loss of taste or smell

Some kids are having symptoms caused by inflammation throughout the body, sometimes several weeks after they were infected with the virus. Doctors are trying to find out how these symptoms are related to coronavirus infection.

Symptoms that have been seen in kids include:

- a fever that lasts several days
- belly pain
- vomiting or diarrhea
- a rash
- red, cracked lips
- red eyes
- swelling of the hands or feet
- joint pain
- dizziness
- vision problems
- a headache
- looking pale

What Should I Do if My Child Has Symptoms?

If your child has any of the symptoms:

- Do your best to stay calm.
- Talk to a health care provider. You can:
    - **Call your doctor.** Your doctor knows your child's health history and will know if your child has any special risks. The doctor will ask how your child is doing and if they've been around someone with known or suspected coronavirus. Your doctor's office will tell you what to do next and whether you need an in-person visit.

      or
    - **Get a telehealth visit.** If this option is available in your area, a health care provider can see your child while you stay at home. If you can, choose a telehealth provider who specializes in caring for kids. If the doctor thinks your child needs care right away, they will guide you on where to go. Check for telehealth in your area now, before anyone in your family is sick.
- Help your child get plenty of rest and drink lots of liquids.
- Watch for signs that your child might need more medical help. **Go to the ER if your child:**
    - looks very sick to you
    - has breathing problems. Look for muscles pulling in between the ribs or the nostrils puffing out with each breath.

- o is confused or very sleepy
- o has chest pain
- o has cold, sweaty, pale or blotchy skin
- o is dizzy

Call 911 if your child struggles to breathe, is too out of breath to talk or walk, turns blue or faints.

How Can I Keep My Family Safe if My Child Has Symptoms?
- Keep your child home. This keeps your child away from other germs. It also helps prevent your child from spreading the illness to others. If the doctor thinks your child might have coronavirus, the whole family will need to stay home.
- Keep other people and pets in the house away from your child as much as possible.
- Try to have **one person only** care for the sick child so others are not exposed.
- If your child is **over 2 years old** and can wear a face mask or cloth face covering without finding it hard to breathe, have them wear one when the caregiver is in the room. Don't leave your child alone while they're wearing a mask or cloth face covering. If your child can't wear one, the caregiver should wear one when in the same room. To see how to put on and remove face masks and coverings, clean them, or make your own cloth face covering, check the CDC's guide.
- If possible, have your sick child use a different bathroom from others. If that isn't possible, wipe down the bathroom often.
- Everyone in your family should wash their hands well and often. Wash with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Use regular household cleaners or wipes to clean things that get touched a lot (doorknobs, light switches, toys, remote controls, phones, etc.). Do this every day.

How Do Doctors Test People for Coronavirus (COVID-19)?
Testing for COVID-19 is changing. Many organizations are working together to help get tests to the people who need them. To test someone for coronavirus, doctors put a long Q-tip into the nose (called a **nasal swab**) and send it to a lab. If the person coughs up mucus, doctors might send that for testing too. Some areas offer drive-thru testing, which lets people stay in their car during the test. **If you think your child has symptoms of COVID-19, call your doctor or local health department.** They will give you the most up-to-date information on testing.

How Is Coronavirus (COVID-19) Treated?
Doctors and researchers are working on medicines and a vaccine for coronavirus. Most people with the illness, including children, get better with rest, fluids, and fever-reducing medicine. Some people with more severe symptoms need treatment in the hospital.

What Else Should I Know?
Keep doing these things to keep your family healthy:
- Wash hands well and often.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.
- Avoid contact with other people, especially those who are sick.
- Make sure kids get all recommended vaccinations for other infections, like the flu and measles.

Source: KidsHealth by Nemours Foundation