



Caring for children at home with COVID-19

Your child tested positive for COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019), which is a respiratory illness that can have mild to severe symptoms like a fever, cough and shortness of breath. Your child's medical team has determined that your child is ready to go home from the hospital. This handout describes important steps that you should follow once you are home.

What symptoms should I watch for at home?

- **Monitor your child's symptoms**, including:
 - Temperature/fever
 - Cough
 - Sore throat
 - Shortness of breath or breathing problems
 - Chills
 - Muscle or body aches
 - New loss of taste or smell
- **If these symptoms get worse**, call your child's pediatrician.
- **If there is an emergency**, call 911 or your local emergency services number.
- **Let your child's primary health care provider know** your child has been discharged from Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital, and has tested positive for COVID-19.

When should I call my child's health care provider?

Call if your child:

- Has a fever higher than 100.4/ 38.0°C
- Won't drink
- Has ear pain or fluid coming out of the ear
- Has a runny or stuffy nose for 2 weeks or longer
- Has a bad cough or chest pain
- Has a persistent headache
- Has diarrhea
- Is getting sicker

When should I take my child to the Emergency Room (ER)?

Go to the Emergency Room if your child:

- Appears dehydrated -- signs include dizziness, drowsiness, a dry or sticky mouth, sunken eyes, crying with few or no tears, or peeing less often (or having fewer wet diapers)
- Is unable to drink or talk
- Has trouble breathing, is breathing fast, or looks blue around the lips.



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Why might the Health Department contact me?

- A representative from the Illinois Department of Public Health may be in touch with you **to discuss contact tracing** — this is the process of identifying people who may have come in contact with your child.
- The state has recommended that all contacts of people with confirmed COVID-19 should be tested.
- **Please be sure to answer any calls from the health department. If you do not hear from anyone, please reach out to your primary care provider to discuss.**

How can I help my child feel better at home?

- **Have your child rest, eat healthy food and drink plenty of water.**
- **Use fever-reducing medications** as needed if your child has a fever – be sure to follow the instructions from your pediatrician, or as listed on the medication label.
- **Take your child's temperature by mouth** with a digital thermometer at least twice a day, every 4 hours after giving medicine. Call your pediatrician if it's over 100.4°F/38°F.

Stay at home and away from others until isolation is no longer needed

- **Self-isolate:** Your child should stay home and away from others to lower the chance of spreading the illness. All household members should also stay home and self-isolate for 14 days after your child meets the criteria for stopping home isolation.
- **Keep your child in 1 room of the house:** Your child should stay in 1 room or be at least 6 feet (2 meters) away from other people and pets.
- **Use a delivery or pick-up service for groceries,** or ask friends or family members to drop off groceries and supplies. Have them leave them outside to avoid direct contact.
- **Avoid visitors and public places:** We do not recommend going to activities or gatherings outside your home, like school, church/mosques, grocery stores or restaurants. We do not recommend playdates or visitors.
- **If caregivers must come into your home for your child's care, let them know that your child has COVID-19.** Caregivers should wear personal protective equipment, like gloves, eye protection and face masks.

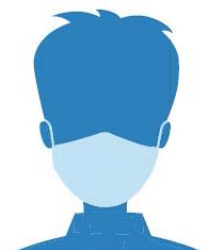
When can we stop home isolation?

In general, most people with COVID-19 can leave home when these 3 things have happened:

1. They have had no fever for at least 24 hours without the use of medicine that reduces fevers
AND
2. Other symptoms have improved, such as cough or shortness of breath
AND
3. At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared

Wear personal protective equipment and practice good hygiene

- **Choose 1 healthy family member to care for your child.** We know that isn't always possible.
- **Have your child wear a facemask or cloth face covering that covers their nose and mouth when they are around people,** including you. If they can't wear a facemask, you should wear one while in the same room with them.





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- Everyone in the house should **wash their hands often with soap and water** for at least 20 seconds, especially after contact with your child. Natural soap is OK to use. You can also use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that has 60-95% alcohol to clean your hands if soap and water aren't available. You should wash your hands with soap and water if they are visibly dirty.
- Everyone in the house should **avoid touching their eyes, nose or mouth** unless they have just cleaned their hands.



How can I reduce germs in my home?

- If possible, **have your child use a separate bathroom from other members of your household.**
 - The bathroom should be cleaned frequently and the toilet lid closed when flushing to prevent the spread of germs.
- **Clean commonly touched objects** including door handles, toilets and faucets, and electronic devices (phones, computers).
 - Use a regular household cleaner or make your own disinfectant by mixing 1part bleach to 9 parts water.
- **When cleaning, wear a facemask or covering and disposable gloves if possible.**
- After cleaning:
 - Remove gloves and throw away.
 - Wash your hands right away with soap and water or use an alcohol-based sanitizer.
 - Remove facemask and throw it away.
 - Wash your hands again with soap and water or use an alcohol-based sanitizer.
- **Do not share household items with anyone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.** All used household items, such as bedding and towels, should be cleaned thoroughly after use. Sick people should use their own tube of toothpaste and soap.
- **Open windows and doors**, as weather allows, to keep air moving through your home.

Can I breastfeed my child?

- If your child is an infant and you are breastfeeding, you can still breastfeed your baby.
- Be sure to wash your hands and your chest area thoroughly with soap and warm water before and after you touch your baby.

What are some resources for my family?

Illinois-based resources

- Call4Calm – text “TALK” to 552020 or for Spanish text “HABLAR” to 552020
- The Illinois Department of Human Services’ Mental Health Division has launched a free-of-charge emotional support text line, Call4Calm, for Illinois residents experiencing stress and mental health issues related to COVID-19.
- Call4Calm is free to use, and individuals will remain anonymous. Once you send a text to the hotline, a counselor from a local community mental health center will contact you within 24 hours.
- Individuals can also text 5-5-2-0-2-0, with key words such as “unemployment” or “food” or “shelter” and will receive information on how to navigate and access supports and services.



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Food resources

- **Find your local food pantry:**
<https://www.chicagosfoodbank.org/>
- Chicago Public Schools are giving out free meals from Monday to Friday. Please call the Healthy CPS Hotline 773-553-KIDS to find the closest school to you. No ID needed for pick up.

Free Medicaid transportation to medical appointments

- **First Transit 866-503-9040**
- **Blue Cross Community HFP-MMAI** (Logistic Care) 1-877-831-3148
- **CountyCare – MCO** (First Transit) 1-630-403-3210
- **Illinicare Health – FHP MCO** 1-866-329-4701
- **Meridian Health Plan** 1-866-606-3700
- **Molina Health Care** 1-844-644-6354

Emotional support

- **For pregnant, postpartum mothers and concerned caregivers:**
If you are feeling overwhelmed, you can call Northshore's MOMS hotline **866.364.MOMS** (866.364.6667) for 24/7 emotional support and referrals to therapy, psychiatry and support groups.
- **NAMI Helpline:**
If you're in a mental health crisis, call 1-800-950 6264 or text "NAMI" to 741741.
- **How to Cope with Anxiety Related to Coronavirus (COVID-19)**
This website suggests ways how to cope with stress during the pandemic. This resource is appropriate for families and health care providers: [verywellmind.com/managing-coronavirus-anxiety-4798909](https://www.verywellmind.com/managing-coronavirus-anxiety-4798909)
- **Free online guided meditation:**
[meditationmuseum.org/](https://www.meditationmuseum.org/)

Sources:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): If You Are Sick or Caring for Someone [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/index.html)
- CDC: COVID-19 and Breastfeeding [cdc.gov/breastfeeding/breastfeeding-special-circumstances/maternal-or-infant-illnesses/covid-19-and-breastfeeding.html](https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/breastfeeding-special-circumstances/maternal-or-infant-illnesses/covid-19-and-breastfeeding.html)
- KidsHealth: Understanding Coronavirus <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/coronavirus-landing-page.html>
- ZeroToThree: Answering Your Young Child's Questions About Coronavirus [zerotothree.org/resources/3265-answering-your-young-child-s-questions-about-coronavirus](https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/3265-answering-your-young-child-s-questions-about-coronavirus)



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For more information

- If you are a Lurie Children's patient or family member and have general questions about COVID-19, please call our COVID-19 hotline at 312-227-5300.
- To speak to a social worker, psychologist or child life specialist for family information and support, please call 312-227-4118.
- Visit Lurie Children's COVID-19 website: <https://www.luriechildrens.org/en/specialties-conditions/2019-novel-coronavirus-ncov/>
- Visit the CDC website: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html)

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