" My child has COVID. What should I know? "

Your child has COVID if they have any **ONE** of the following:
- ✓ A positive polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test
- ✓ A positive rapid antigen test (RAT)
- ✓ Symptoms of COVID

Most children with symptoms of COVID do not need a test to confirm the diagnosis. For more information on testing, visit **rebrand.ly/COVID-PCR-test**.

Symptoms of COVID include:

ANY ONE of the following:		**ANY TWO** of the following:
✓ Fever > 37.7° C and/or chills ✓ A cough that's new or worse than usual ✓ Trouble breathing ✓ Trouble tasting or smelling	**OR**	✓ Runny or stuffed-up nose ✓ Headache ✓ Extreme tiredness ✓ Sore throat ✓ Muscle aches/joint pain ✓ Vomiting or diarrhea

! **A newborn less than 3-months old with a fever should go to the emergency department.**

Self-isolation

If your child has symptoms of COVID or a positive test, they need to self isolate. Notify anyone who may have been a close contact.

Everyone the child lives with must self-isolate too. For information on how long to self-isolate and who is a close contact see: **rebrand.ly/Feeling-Unwell**). Your Public Health Unit will provide specific advice on return to school.

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Self-isolation means staying home. It also means staying apart from others inside the home if possible. This is especially important if a household member has a very weak immune system OR is over 12-years old and has not had at least two doses of a COVID vaccine.

It may not be practical to keep your child apart from others in the home. You can still wear masks, improve ventilation by opening windows and have your child eat away from others.

For more information on caring for a child who needs to self-isolate, visit: **rebrand.ly/PHO-Child-Self-Isolate**

If your newborn has COVID, they should still be seen by their doctor or nurse for a weight check within a few days of birth.

Caring for your child

Most children do not get seriously sick with COVID. Most children can be cared for safely at home.

If your child has ongoing health issues, they may be at higher risk of getting very sick from COVID and you should talk to someone on your health team.

How to care for your child:
  » Let them get plenty of rest
  » Make sure they get enough fluids, including water, soups, sports drinks or even popsicles. Breastmilk/formula is enough for young babies who drink only that
  » Treat fever or pain with over-the-counter medicine. Acetaminophen (Tylenol/Tempra) is the best choice if your child can take it
  » Treat a stuffed-up nose with saline drops or sprays or the steam from a shower
  » Treat a cough with a humidifier or the steam from a shower. If the cough sounds like a bark, cool outside air may help. If your child is at least 1-year old, you can also give them 1-2 teaspoons of honey in the evening

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For other questions, please visit **ConfusedAboutCOVID.ca**.

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When should I seek help for my child?

For most children, COVID causes mild illness. However, some children may get more sick and need medical care. Children's health can get worse quickly, so keep a close eye on them and speak to your doctor if you have any concerns.

Call your doctor if your child:

✓ Has a fever that has lasted more than 4 days

✓ Is unusually irritable and won't stop fussing, even after treating their fever

✓ Has a fever that went away for 1 day or longer (without fever medicine) and then came back

✓ Has special needs that make caring for them more difficult

✓ Develops a new fever together with other symptoms like dizziness, extreme low energy, difficulty breathing, severe tummy pain, diarrhea, vomiting, red eyes or body rash a few days or weeks AFTER they recover from COVID. These symptoms could signal a rare complication of COVID

Call 911 or go to the emergency department if:

✓ You are worried that your child is seriously ill

✓ Your child is younger than 3 months and has a fever

✓ Your child has a weakened immune system because of a medical condition or treatment and has a fever

✓ Your child is working hard to breathe. For example, if they are breathing very fast, or if you see sucking in between the ribs with each breath, their stomach moving deeply in and out or if there is a blue colour to their lips or tongue

✓ Your child is at risk of dehydration from vomiting or constant diarrhea or if they aren't drinking enough fluids

✓ Your child is dehydrated. For example, they have a dry mouth, sunken eyes or they are crying without tears or peeing much less than usual

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Remember that vaccination is the best protection against COVID.

Although COVID usually causes mild illness in children, a small number of children will become sick enough that they need to be treated in hospital.

The COVID vaccine protects children from serious COVID illness. It also reduces the chance they will spread COVID to others in your family and community.

All children age 5 and over should be vaccinated against COVID. The vaccine for children is safe.

Even if your child gets COVID and recovers, it is still important that they get the COVID vaccine, usually 4-8 weeks after the infection. The vaccine protects them from re-infection and lowers the chances of them catching COVID and spreading it to other people.

For reliable information on COVID in kids, visit: **https://www.aboutkidshealth.ca/covid19**

If you have questions about the COVID vaccine,
» Speak to your doctor
» Book an appointment with the COVID vaccine consult service at the Hospital for Sick Children **https://www.sickkids.ca/en/care-services/support-services/covid-19-vaccine-consult/**
» Visit these websites:
  • **https://kidshealthfirst.ca/**
  • **http://www.oacas.org/what-we-do/communications-and-public-engagement/maxthevax/**
  • **https://uwaterloo.ca/pharmacy/sites/ca.pharmacy/files/uploads/files/faq_covid-19_vaccines_for_children.pdf**

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