

COVID-19 and Children

There is much more to be learned about how this disease affects children. While some children and infants have been sick with COVID-19, most cases have been in adults. Some reports suggest that infants under one year old and those with [underlying medical conditions](#) may be at higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19 than other children.

- [Symptoms of COVID-19](#) are similar in children and adults. However, children with COVID-19 generally have mild symptoms.
- Symptoms in children include cold-like symptoms, such as fever, runny nose, and cough. Vomiting and diarrhea have also been reported in some cases.
- Children with [certain underlying medical conditions](#), such as chronic lung disease or asthma, serious heart conditions, or weak immune systems, might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Call your child's healthcare provider if you are worried about your child's underlying medical condition or if your child has symptoms of COVID-19.
- In case of emergency, call 911 or go to your local emergency department. Emergency departments have infection prevention plans to protect you and your child from getting COVID-19 if your child needs emergency care. **Do not delay getting emergency care for your child because of COVID-19.**

Children may have mild symptoms

Based on available evidence, children do not appear to be at higher risk for COVID-19 than adults. While some children and infants have been sick with COVID-19, adults make up most of the known cases to date.

Watch for symptoms

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness.

Symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure to the virus**. People with these symptoms or combinations of symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

Or at least two of these symptoms:

- Fever
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain

- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

[Children](#) have similar symptoms to adults and generally have mild illness.

This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.

It's not known yet whether some children may be at higher risk for severe illness, for example, children with underlying medical conditions and special healthcare needs. There is more to learn about how the disease impacts children. symptoms of COVID-19 are similar in children and adults. However, children with confirmed COVID-19 have generally shown mild symptoms. Reported symptoms in children include cold-like symptoms, such as fever, runny nose, and cough. Vomiting and diarrhea have also been reported.

If children meet in groups, it can put everyone at risk. Children with COVID-19 may only have mild symptoms, but they can still pass this virus onto others who may be at higher risk, including [older adults and people who have serious underlying medical conditions](#).

Keep children healthy

Watch your child for any signs of illness

- If you see any sign of illness consistent with [symptoms of COVID-19](#), particularly fever, cough, or shortness of breath, call your healthcare provider and keep your child at home and away from others as much as possible. Follow CDC's guidance on [what to do if you are sick](#).

Watch for signs of stress in your child

- Some common changes to watch for include excessive worry or sadness, unhealthy eating or sleeping habits, and difficulty with attention and concentration. For more information, see the "For Parents" section of CDC's [Stress and Coping](#).
- Take time to talk with your child or teen about the COVID-19 outbreak. Answer questions and [share facts](#) about COVID-19 in a way that your child or teen can understand.
- Go to CDC's [Helping Children Cope with Emergencies](#) or [Talking with Children About COVID-19](#) for more information.

Teach and reinforce everyday preventive actions

- Parents and caretakers play an important role in teaching children to wash their hands. Explain that hand washing can keep them healthy and stop the virus from spreading to others.
- Be a good role model—if you wash your hands often, they're more likely to do the same.
- Make [handwashing a family activity](#).
- Learn more about handwashing and other [everyday preventive actions](#).

Help your child stay active

- Encourage your child to play outdoors—it's great for physical and mental health. Take a walk with your child or go on a bike ride.
- Use indoor activity breaks (like stretch breaks or dance breaks) throughout the day to help your child stay healthy and focused.

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- The symptoms of COVID-19 are similar in children and adults. However, children with confirmed COVID-19 have generally shown mild symptoms. Reported symptoms in children include cold-like symptoms, such as fever, runny nose, and cough. Vomiting and diarrhea have also been reported.
- It's not known yet whether some children may be at higher risk for severe illness, for example, children with underlying medical conditions and special healthcare needs. There is more to learn about how the disease impacts children. You can learn more about who is most at risk for health problems if they have COVID-19 infection on [Are You at Higher Risk for Severe Illness](#).
- More information can be found on the CDC's website on the Coronavirus 19. Your child's doctor can also be called to answer any questions that you may have.