



Changes to visitation at Boston Children's as of March 16, 2020

In order to keep you and your family safe, and to reduce the spread of COVID-19, Boston Children's Hospital has added temporary limitations to our visitor policy.

- Until further notice, only **two adult caregivers** may visit or accompany a patient at one time.
- For their own safety, visitors under the age of 18—including siblings—may not visit. This includes visiting patients who are staying in the hospital, as well as accompanying a patient to an appointment at any of our locations, or seeking care in our Emergency Department.

We know this may cause scheduling challenges, particularly for families with younger siblings, but we can all play a role in reducing the spread of this virus. We're grateful for your help as we work together to safeguard all of our patients, families and staff. For more information, visit childrenshospital.org/patient-resources/visitors.

Why are Boston Children's staff members wearing face masks?

For the safety of our patients, families, and staff, Boston Children's is requiring that all employees – from administrators to doctors and nurses – wear a face mask. This is to help prevent the spread of germs, and it does not mean that your staff are caring for a patient with COVID-19.

What is a coronavirus?

Coronaviruses are a common kind of virus. They most often cause a cold. Sometimes coronaviruses can cause more serious illnesses.

What is COVID-19?

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is closely monitoring an outbreak caused by a **novel** (new) coronavirus called **SARS-CoV-2**. This virus causes an illness called **COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019)**.
- COVID-19 first started in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. There are now large numbers of confirmed cases, including outside of Wuhan and in other countries.
- The first case in the United States was found on January 21, 2020. At this time, it's not clear how long it will keep spreading.

How does COVID-19 spread?

- Doctors think coronaviruses spread from person-to-person through tiny drops of saliva or fluids from the mouth or nose. These drops are released into the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes. This is similar to the ways the flu and other respiratory diseases spread.
- The spread of coronaviruses between people usually happens when they are in close contact with each other.

- Some viruses can spread easily and quickly while other viruses are harder to spread. We don't know yet how easily the novel coronavirus spreads from person to person.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

People with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness symptoms, including fever, cough and shortness of breath.

The CDC believes that symptoms of COVID-19 may start between 2–14 days after exposure (being infected by the virus). **Anyone who thinks they may have been exposed to COVID-19 should contact their healthcare provider right away.**

Can my child be tested?

Currently, testing needs to be approved by the Department of Public Health. Your doctor will determine whether testing should be requested in consultation with Infection Prevention and the Department of Public Health.

How do you treat COVID-19?

The treatment is supportive care, such as providing oxygen or breathing support if needed and staying hydrated. There is no specific treatment recommended for COVID-19 infection yet.

Is there a vaccine for COVID-19?

There is not a vaccine yet to prevent COVID-19.

How can I help protect my family?

Follow these tips:

- **Wash your hands often with soap and water** for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- **Cover your nose and mouth** when you cough or sneeze.
- **If you don't have clean hands, then don't touch your eyes, nose, and mouth.**

How can I help protect my family?

- **Clean and disinfect areas that people often touch,** like toys and doorknobs.
- **If you or a loved one think you may have been exposed to COVID-19, contact your healthcare provider right away.**

How does Boston Children's prepare for new infectious diseases?

- We have a special team of doctors and nurses who train for the possibility of new or uncommon infectious diseases.
- We also have experts in Infection Prevention who advise our doctors and nurses about what protective equipment should be worn to prevent the spread of infections.
- **You can help us by telling hospital staff if you or a household member had close contact with a symptomatic person diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 14 days – and if you also have a fever, cough or trouble breathing.** This helps our staff to identify possible COVID-19 cases and care for people who may have it right away.

Where can I learn more about COVID-19?

- If you are a Boston Children's patient or family member and you have questions general questions about COVID-19, please call our COVID-19 hotline at 855-281-5730 or 617-355-4200.
- Visit Boston Children's COVID-19 website, childrenshospital.org/conditions-and-treatments/conditions/c/coronavirus.
- Visit the CDC's website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

**Information in this sheet is from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) and the [Boston Public Health Commission](#).*

This Family Education Sheet is available in [Arabic](#), [Chinese Simplified](#), and [Spanish](#).