

# Family Education Sheet

## Home Care for Children with COVID-19



Boston Children's Hospital

View more health education materials at  
[www.bostonchildrens.org/familyeducation](http://www.bostonchildrens.org/familyeducation)

Your child tested positive for COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019), a mild to severe respiratory illness with 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 sheet describes important steps to take at 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 provider know** your child has been discharged from Boston Children's 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?

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)
- Unable to drink or talk
- Has trouble breathing, is breathing fast, or looks blue around the lips.

### Why might the Massachusetts Department of Public Health contact me?

- A representative from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health may be in touch with you **to discuss contact tracing** — 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 "MA COVID Team."** **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 directed on the label or by your pediatrician), as needed if your child has a fever.
- **Take your child's temperature by mouth** with a digital thermometer at least twice a day, at least 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:

- They have had no fever for at least 24 hours without the use of medicine that reduces fevers
- **and**
- Other symptoms have improved, such as cough or shortness of breath
- **and**
- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared\*

\*In some cases, for people with severe illness or immune system problems, 20 days need to pass 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.
- 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?

### Massachusetts-based resources

#### Massachusetts 211

Dial 2-1-1 on your phone. It connects you to information about critical health and human services available in the community. If you are unable to reach 2-1-1, call 1-877-211-MASS (6277). Hearing-impaired callers can call 508-370-4890 TTY.

## Food resources

### FoodSource Hotline

To find food resources in your community, call 1-800-645-8333 TTY 1-800-377-1292

[projectbread.org/get-help/foodsource-hotline.html](https://projectbread.org/get-help/foodsource-hotline.html)

### The Greater Boston Food Bank

The Greater Boston Food Bank partners with 520+ hunger-relief agencies in Eastern Massachusetts.

Call: 617-427-5200

[gbfb.org/need-food](https://gbfb.org/need-food)

## Financial support

### United Way MA COVID-19 Family Support Fund

<https://unitedwaymassbay.org/get-involved/covid-19-family-fund/>

For general questions, email [info@supportunitedway.org](mailto:info@supportunitedway.org)

## Transportation

### Ridematch

A searchable directory of public, private and accessible transportation options in Massachusetts.

<https://massridematch.org/>

## Emotional support

### Parental Stress Line

Need someone to talk to? This 24/7 service is free and confidential, 24/7. Call: 1-800-632-8188

### NAMI Helpline:

If you're in a 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. It's appropriate for families and providers.

[verywellmind.com/managing-coronavirus-anxiety-4798909](https://verywellmind.com/managing-coronavirus-anxiety-4798909)

### Free online guided meditation:

[meditationmuseum.org/](https://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://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://cdc.gov/breastfeeding/breastfeeding-special-circumstances/maternal-or-infant-illnesses/covid-19-and-breastfeeding.html)



Scan QR codes with your phone camera

- 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://zerotothree.org/resources/3265-answering-your-young-child-s-questions-about-coronavirus)



## For more information

If you're a Boston Children's patient or family member and have general questions about COVID-19, please call our COVID-19 hotline at 855-281-5730 or 617-355-4200.

**Scan QR codes with  
your phone camera**

Visit Boston Children's COVID-19 website:  
[childrenshospital.org/conditions-and-treatments/conditions/c/coronavirus](https://childrenshospital.org/conditions-and-treatments/conditions/c/coronavirus)



Visit the CDC website:  
[cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html)

