

# Advice for parents/carers during coronavirus

It can be confusing to know what to do when your child is unwell during the coronavirus pandemic. Remember that the NHS is still providing safe care.

GP practices and hospitals have made changes to help reduce the risk of infection. Only one parent/carer will be able to attend A&E with their child. Please use the hand sanitisers provided, wear a face covering in enclosed spaces and maintain social distancing. **Remember: if your child is unwell, seek advice and medical attention.**

Here is some advice to help:



**RED**

## If your child has any of the following signs:

- Pale, mottled (blotchy) skin that feels unusually cold.
- Severe breathing difficulty – long pauses in their breathing, irregular breathing, starts going blue, or is too breathless to talk / eat / drink.
- A fit / seizure (unless these are expected).
- Becomes extremely distressed (crying for a very long time despite distraction), is confused, sleepy all the time and difficult to wake up or not responding even when awake.
- Has a rash that does not disappear when a glass is lightly pressed against the skin.
- Under 3 months of age with a temperature of 38°C / 100.4°F or above (unless fever in the 48 hours following vaccinations and no other **RED** or **AMBER** features).
- Pain in the testicles, especially in teenage boys.
- The child has seriously harmed themselves and needs medical help.
- **If you are frightened because your child looks very unwell.**

## You need urgent help:

Go to the nearest A&E department or call 999



**AMBER**

## If your child has any of the following signs:

- Finding it hard to breathe, including: drawing in of the muscles below their lower ribs, at their neck or between their ribs.
- Seems dehydrated (sunken eyes, drowsy or no wee passed for 12 hours).
- Becomes excessively sleepy or irritable (unable to settle with toys, TV, food or comfort) - especially despite their temperature coming down.
- Extreme shivering or muscle pain without an obvious explanation.
- Babies of 3 to 6 months of age with a temperature of 39°C / 102.2°F or above.
- Babies and children with a fever of 38°C or above for more than 5 days
- Constantly being sick.
- Constant or worsening tummy pain.
- Blood in the poo or wee.
- Increasingly thirsty and weeing more.
- Any injury of arms or legs causing reduced movement or persistent pain.
- Head injury causing constant crying or drowsiness.
- **Is getting worse or if you are worried.**

**Immediately contact your GP and make an appointment for your child to be seen that day or call NHS 111 - dial 111.**

During the coronavirus pandemic, at peak times, access to a healthcare professional may be delayed. If symptoms continue for 4 hours or more and you have not been able to speak to either a member of staff from your GP practice or to NHS 111, then consider taking them to your nearest A&E.



**GREEN**

## Your child has none of the **RED** or **AMBER** signs above, care for them at home but watch for any new signs developing:

- If your child has any symptoms that might be COVID-19 (high temperature, new continuous cough or loss of taste/smell) arrange for them to be tested via the NHS testing website or by calling 119.
- You, and anyone in your support bubble, must remain at home until your child's test results are back.
- If your child has been burned, visit <https://safetea.org.uk/first-aid/> for first aid advice and for information about when to seek medical attention.

## Continue providing your child's care at home.

If you are still concerned about your child, contact NHS 111 - visit [111.nhs.uk](https://111.nhs.uk) or dial 111.



**MENTAL HEALTH**

- If you are worried and your child is known to child or adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), please contact them.
- If your child needs urgent mental health support or advice, visit <https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health> for local services and 24/7 urgent helplines, or text SHOUT to 85258
- If you notice any self-harm injuries on your child, please contact the NHS 24/7 Mental Health online support (visit [www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/mental-health-services/where-to-get-urgent-help-for-mental-health/](https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/mental-health-services/where-to-get-urgent-help-for-mental-health/)) or your GP.
- If you are worried about an eating problem/disorder, contact BEAT (visit <https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/support-services>) or your GP.
- Helpful advice is also available at Every Mind Matters (<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters>) and MindEd for Families (<https://www.mindedforfamilies.org.uk/>).

# Parents frequently asked questions

Updated July 2021

## What should I do if my child has symptoms of coronavirus?

If your child has COVID-19 symptoms they should get a PCR test. Your child and anyone you live with should stay at home until you get their test results – only leave your home to have the test.

If you are worried about your child, contact your GP or NHS 111. For children under 5 call 111, for children over 5 use the NHS 111 online coronavirus service.



## Should I be worried if my child has symptoms of coronavirus?

All variants of COVID-19 generally only cause mild illness in children. See the NHS advice for parents and carers: <https://bit.ly/3x08WsJ>

## Can I give my child ibuprofen to help with coronavirus symptoms?

Yes, you can give either paracetamol or ibuprofen, but not both at the same time

The Royal College of Paediatrics and Children's health have more advice for parents here: <https://bit.ly/2W8ITUGcarers>

## What if I'm worried about my children's mental health?

Good Thinking provides mental health and wellbeing advice for parents in London. You can find specific resources for autism, eating disorders and ADHD here: <https://bit.ly/3zoSa8h>

Young people in North West London can access free online counselling with [Kooth.com](https://www.kooth.com)

Our blog has more parents' and carers' frequently asked questions. See these posters for young people and babies under 3 months

## How can you tell the difference between coronavirus symptoms and cold symptoms?

Some of the symptoms of a cold are similar to COVID-19 – there's no way to tell the difference without a test. If your child has any of these symptoms of COVID-19 they should stay home and get a PCR test:

- a high temperature - above or equal to 37.8°C (100°F)
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot, for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours
- a loss or change to sense of smell or taste – this means they cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

NHS coronavirus in children webpage: <https://bit.ly/2V6suhD>

## What should I do if my child has a cough or temperature?

Trust your instincts, keep a log of how your child is doing (keep a diary with their temperature and symptoms). If you are worried contact your GP.



Find out more information about what to do for coughs and fevers:

NHS Healthier Together advice on coughs and colds: <https://bit.ly/36S0lbt>

NHS Healthier Together fever advice: <https://bit.ly/2Ttj4wt>

## What if I can't get a face to face appointment with my GP?

You may be given a phone or video call with your GP. If you are still worried, request a face to face appointment. You can use these useful traffic light posters to help you know when to look after your child at home: <https://bit.ly/2V6Zo1E>