



Discharge Instructions for +COVID-19 or suspected COVID-19 Pediatric Patients

What is COVID-19 and what are the symptoms of COVID-19?

- COVID-19 stands for 2019 Novel Coronavirus and was first identified in December 2019. It is a new virus and is part of the family of coronaviruses that usually cause the common cold. Symptoms of COVID-19 range from mild to severe and some patients may have no symptoms. The most common symptoms are cough and difficulty breathing but other symptoms that may occur, particularly in children, are abdominal pain, diarrhea, nausea and/or vomiting, fever, chills, muscle aches, headache, sore throat, or a new loss of taste or smell. Most patients will have a mild disease and recover but some may get extremely sick and need to go to an emergency room and/or be admitted to a hospital. More adults have had severe illness compared to children. An exceedingly small number of children have died compared to adults who have died.

What is Pediatric Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome Associated with Coronavirus Disease 2019?

- Starting in February 2020 several European countries reported increased cases of previously healthy children presenting with a severe inflammatory syndrome that had similar findings to another syndrome called Kawasaki disease. These patients had persistent fever and many of their organs were seriously affected. In early May 2020, New York reported a considerable number of cases as well and currently all over the country cases are being identified including here in the Greater DC Area. Most of these children either tested positive for current or recent infection with COVID-19.

Which children are most at risk for more severe illness with COVID-19?

- Children with chronic medical conditions such as lung disease like asthma, bronchopulmonary dysplasia; congenital heart disease; diabetes; suppressed immune systems may be at risk for more severe illness.
- Infants may be at higher risk as well.
- Keep in mind that children without chronic medical conditions may also contract COVID-19 but it less likely but may they become severely ill with COVID-19.



Today your child was evaluated and either tested positive for COVID-19, has a pending COVID-19 test result, or was not tested but suspected to have COVID-19 based on their symptoms and exam.

- If you are waiting for final testing results you may call the COVID Lab Line for results 3-5 days after your test was sent (877-704-9292).
- If your child was not tested but the provider clinically thought your child had COVID19 follow these precautions as if your child had tested positive.

If your child had a negative rapid point of care (POC) COVID-19 test and their symptoms have not improved or are worse, please return in 48 hours to the location your child was tested for repeat testing and evaluation; this will help decrease the chance of a false negative result.

Caring for your child:

- Fever medications such as infant's or children's acetaminophen (same as *Tylenol*) and/or infant's or children's ibuprofen (same as *Motrin*) may be used to help keep children comfortable when having fever, muscle pains, headache, or sore throat. Follow the directions you were given for proper dosing of these medications and keep a log of how often you are administering medication to avoid accidental overdose. The American Academy of Pediatrics states that there is not enough evidence to recommend against using ibuprofen in patients with COVID-19, unless your child has an underlying condition that makes ibuprofen unsafe for them.
- For rehydration, use oral electrolyte solutions or oral electrolyte solution popsicles (such as the generic form or brand name of *Pedialyte*) which come in many flavors. If your toddler or older child refuses these you may try *Gatorade*, ginger ale, or juices diluted with water. Also, using a clean medication syringe may help. If your child is breastfeeding continue breastfeeding as much as possible and you may also need to breastfeed in smaller, more frequent sessions and supplement with an oral electrolyte solution like *Pedialyte* (**not** *Gatorade* for infants).
- For cough: Cough and cold medications should not be given to children under 6 years of age. Honey should not be given to children under 2 years of age. For infants 3 months of age to one year of age you may give warm clear fluids like warm water or warm apple juice 5 milliliters to 15 milliliters four times a day. For children 2 years to 5 years you may give 2.5 milliliters (same as ½ teaspoon) of honey four times a day and before bed for cough. For children ages 6 years to 11 years may give 5 milliliters (same as 1 teaspoon) of honey four times of day and before bed for cough.

How to keep the rest of your family and others safe:

- Separate family members with COVID-19 from others as much as possible in a specific room away from other people in the home. If possible, they should use a different bathroom. Limit visitors to the house.
- Avoid sharing personal household items-like glasses, towels, bedding. After these items are used, they should be washed thoroughly with soap and water.
- Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces (like counters, tabletops, doorknobs, light switches, toilets, bathroom fixtures, phones, bedside tables, and keyboards) often. Immediately clean any surfaces that may have come into contact with blood, stool, spit-up, or other bodily fluids (e.g. after sneezing). Use household cleaning spray or wipes.
- Infected children should avoid contact with pets.



- Call ahead (unless ER) before visiting the doctor to let them know about your child's COVID-19 diagnosis so they can prepare for you coming in and protect staff and other patients.

How to protect your family:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds and instruct your child and all family members to perform effective hand washing by giving them a song to sing while handwashing such as "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" or "Happy Birthday" sung twice. If soap and water are not available, then use hand sanitizer with 60% or higher alcohol content. Do not make your own hand sanitizer. If made incorrectly it can cause burns.
- Reduce close contact with others by practicing physical or social distancing by staying at least 6 feet from others. It is best to stay in your home as much as possible and avoiding groups. It is also best to keep children home when safely possible when running such essential errands as grocery shopping, going to the pharmacy, or going to the bank. **Children over age 2 years with COVID-19 should wear masks if going outside** and it is difficult to maintain 6 feet distance from others.
- Follow local and state guidance on travel and stay-at-home restrictions.
- Teach kids to cough and sneeze into their arm or elbow, not their hands or to use a tissue and then to throw the tissue away and wash hands.
- Teach children to avoid touching their face, eyes, and picking their nose.
- There has been an increase in accidental ingestions/contact for children with cleaning products. Please keep such products safely stored and away from reach.

How long to isolation at home and follow the above instructions (based on test result):

- Positive COVID-19 result or no test was performed but COVID-19 was still suspected: Children should remain under In-home isolation (not leaving the home unless to go to the doctor) until fever-free for 72 hours, respiratory symptoms have improved, and at least 10 days have passed since the onset of symptoms.
- Negative COVID-19 result: In-home isolation until fever-free for 24 hours or more unless your provider felt that your child's test was a false negative and you should then follow in-home isolation as if your child had a positive test.
***Note:** If testing on the rapid point of care machine your healthcare provider may have recommend repeat testing in 48 hours if your child has worsened symptoms or symptoms that have not improved, so you should follow isolation as if your child had a positive test until then.*
- Awaiting test results: Follow Positive COVID-19 in-home isolation guidelines until your child's results are back and you will then be given further instructions by a provider.

Signs and symptoms to monitor/return for:

- Take your child to the closest ER for persistent fever (100.4 or higher in infants under 3 months), trouble breathing, chest pain, persistent vomiting, no urine for 8 hours or more, lethargy (can't arouse your child to get out of bed), stiff neck, changes in mentation, or severe worsening of symptoms.
- Call your child's pediatrician ASAP (and if you are unable to reach them go to closest ER) if your child has been having persistent fever either measured or by touch for over 24 hours **AND** have either one or more of the following **OR** have any worsening symptoms:
 - worsening abdominal pain
 - vomiting



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- diarrhea
- injected/red eyes without pus/discharge
- red or swollen or cracked lips
- red tongue
- rash anywhere in the body (especially if more severe in the diaper area)
- swollen lymph node on one side of the neck
- swollen hands or feet
- very fussy or irritable, and/or
- develops peeling of skin on fingers or toes days/weeks after a fever

Also, if any of the symptoms above develop after your child's fever resolves call your doctor ASAP (and if you are unable to reach them go to the closest ER).

- **For other questions such as when to end quarantine, questions about OTC medications or other non-life-threatening symptoms please call your primary care doctor or consider using MedStar eVisit which can help answer questions from home (see link below).**

Recommendations related to COVID-19 may change over time. Please check the MedStar Health Patient Information Website for updates: www.medstarhealth.org/COVID19

For any questions please visit **MedStar eVisit** anytime, anywhere for 24/7 video access from any device, no appointments are necessary. Download app from Apple or Android.

<https://www.medstarhealth.org/medstar-health-evisit/>

Sources:

1. CDC Health Advisory May 14, 2020 Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C) Associated with Coronavirus Disease 2019
2. 2019 Novel Coronavirus. Healthychildren.org Handout AAP May 14, 2020
3. COVID-19 and Multi-System Inflammatory Syndrome. Healthychildren.org Handout AAP May 14,2020