



www.clearwaterrx.com

clearwaterpharmacy@hotmail.com

Corona Virus Q & A

1. How are Coronaviruses spread?

Like other respiratory illnesses human coronaviruses most commonly spread to others from an infected person through:

- Droplets produced through coughing, sneezing or talking.
- Close personal contact, such as caring for an infected person.
- Touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes before washing your hands.

Some people get COVID-19 without ever showing symptoms but they can still spread the infection to others.

2. What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Reported illnesses have ranged from people with mild or no symptoms to people becoming severely ill, requiring admission to the hospital, and dying.

Symptoms may include the following: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting. This list of symptoms is not all inclusive.

If you develop fever, cough, shortness of breath, or your healthcare provider tells you that you are likely to have COVID-19, you should self-isolate at home. If you develop other symptoms listed above or other worrying symptoms that are not on the list, please consult your provider about the need for testing and isolation.

3. I did not have symptoms but was tested for COVID-19 anyways, is there anything that I should be doing while I wait for my test results.

We do not recommend that asymptomatic individuals get tested for COVID-19 unless they are a close contact of someone with COVID-19 but if you do get tested even though you don't have symptoms, you should continue to follow recommended physical (social) distancing practices, such as staying home and staying at least 6 feet away from others when you are outside your home until your test results are back. You should also use a cloth face covering whenever you leave the home and are around others that are not part of your household. If you were a contact to a suspected or positive case of COVID-19 you should remain in quarantine at your

home and away from others until your results are back and then follow the guidance below based on what those results show.

4. I did not have symptoms but was tested for COVID-19 anyways and my test is negative is there anything I should do?

When leaving your home, follow recommended physical distancing practices by staying at least 6 feet away from others and using a cloth face covering when you are in contact with others outside your home. It is important to note that a negative test result may just mean that you were not infected at the time the test was done but you could still become infected at a later point so it is important to continue to practice prevention measures such as physical distancing and washing your hands frequently.

It is important to note that if you were a [contact](#) to a suspected or positive case when you were tested you should remain in [quarantine](#) for the full 14 days even if your test comes back negative. This is because the incubation period for the virus can be up to 14 days and unless you were tested on the 14th day from your exposure, a negative test earlier in the quarantine period does not mean you are not infected.

5. I did not have symptoms but was tested for COVID-19 anyways and my test is positive is there anything I should do?

Even though you don't have symptoms if your test comes back positive you should stay home and away from the public for at least 10 days from when you were tested. As we learn more about the novel coronavirus, we are finding that people can be infectious even before they start to show symptoms. It could be that your test was done before your symptoms began or that you won't show symptoms at all.

If you were a [contact](#) to a suspected or positive case when you were tested you can be released as soon as you have completed 10 days from the date of your test even if this is before your [quarantine](#) period is over, as long as you remain symptom-free.

6. I did not have symptoms when I tested positive for COVID-19 but I developed symptoms during my isolation period. Do I have to stay in isolation for longer?

The clock resets if you develop symptoms during your isolation period. If you develop symptoms you have to stay isolated at home for at least 3 days after your fever has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medications, AND there is improvement in your respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath), AND at least 10 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared.

If you were a [contact](#) to a suspected case and were in [quarantine](#) when your symptoms developed you must follow the isolation instructions for people with symptoms

7. I have symptoms and just got tested for COVID-19 is there anything I should do while waiting for my test results?

You should stay home and self-isolate until the test results are back. See the guidance for [home care](#) on the public health website that tells you how to take care of yourself while you are at home waiting for your test results. See the sections below for what to do once your results are back.

Be sure to tell all your [close contact](#) they need to be in quarantine for 14 days after their last contact with you. Refer to the [health officer order for home quarantine](#).

8. I have symptoms and got tested for COVID-19 but my results are negative is there anything I should be doing?

If you are symptomatic but have negative test results for COVID-19, we still recommend that you stay home for at least 3 days (72 hours) after your fever has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medications, AND there is improvement in your respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath), AND at least 10 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared.

It is important to note that if you were a [contact](#) to a suspected or positive case when you got tested you must remain in quarantine for the full 14 days even if your test results were negative.

9. I have symptoms and my test for COVID-19 is now positive what should I be doing?

You should continue to remain in isolation until at least 3 days (72 hours) after your fever has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medications and there is improvement in your respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath), AND at least 10 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared. Follow instructions for [home isolation](#) found on the public health website and refer to the [health officer orders for home isolation](#).

Be sure to tell all your [close contacts](#) they need to be in quarantine for 14 days after their last contact with you. Refer to the [health officer order for home quarantine](#).

10. Do I still have to stay 6 feet away from others and wear a cloth face covering even after I come out of quarantine or isolation?

Since we are still learning more about the novel coronavirus and how long people can remain infectious, all individuals are required to stay 6 feet apart from others and wear a cloth face covering in public regardless of what their test results were or whether they have already been in isolation or quarantine.



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clearwaterpharmacy@hotmail.com

Positive or likely to have Covid 19

SUMMARY

If you have or are likely to have COVID-19* you are required to:

- **Isolate yourself**, and
- **Tell your [close contacts](#) that they need to quarantine**

*You are considered to have (or likely to have) COVID-19, if you have a positive diagnostic (swab or saliva) test for COVID-19 and/or were told by a provider that you are likely to have COVID-19 and/or you have symptoms that are consistent with COVID-19 (fever, cough, or shortness of breath).

Please help slow the spread of COVID-19 by answering if you get a call, text, or e-mail from "Columbia, SC or DHEC.SC.GOV" for [Contact Tracing](#) efforts

When Does My Home Isolation End?

If you had symptoms, you must stay home until:

- At least 10 days* have passed since your symptoms first started **and**
- You have had no fever for at least 24 hours (without the use of medicine that reduces fevers) **and**
- Your symptoms have improved (for example, cough or shortness of breath)

If you tested positive for COVID-19 but never had any symptoms:

- You must stay home for 10 days after the test was taken, **but**
- If you develop symptoms, you need to follow the instructions above

*If you have a [condition](#) that severely weakens your immune system you might need to stay home for longer than 10 days. Talk to your healthcare provider for more information.

- [Stay away](#) from household members.
- Do not go to work, school, or public areas.
- If you must leave home to get essential medical care, drive yourself, if possible. If you cannot drive yourself, keep as much distance as possible between you and the driver and others (e.g. sit in the back seat), leave the windows down, and wear a mask, if possible. If you do not have a mask, wear a cloth face covering.
- If someone from outside your household is shopping for you, ask them to leave the food and other supplies at your door, if possible. Pick them up after the person has left. If you need help finding free delivery services, social services, essential items like food and medicines call the pharmacy and we will have a community health care worker help you.

Ending Isolation and returning to work or school

- When [your home isolation ends](#) (see box above) you can go back to your usual activities, including returning to work and/or school.
- Continue to practice physical distancing (stay 6 feet away from others) and to wear a cloth face covering when you are in public settings where other people are present.
- You do not need to have a negative test or a letter from Public Health to return to work or school.



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QUARANTINE:

Tell your close contacts that they need to quarantine

Your close contacts need to know that they could be infected and need to quarantine for 14 days after their last contact with you. Give them the [home quarantine instructions](#) (below). Your close contacts must quarantine even if they feel well.

Definition of a Close Contact

A "close contact" is any of the following people who were exposed to you while you were infectious*:

- a. Any person who was within 6 feet of you for at least 15 minutes
- b. Any person who had unprotected contact with your body fluids and/or secretions. For example, you coughed or sneezed on them, you shared utensils, a cup, or saliva with them, or they cared for you without wearing appropriate protective equipment.

***You are considered to be infectious (you can spread COVID-19 to others) from 2 days before your symptoms first appeared until your home isolation ends. If you tested positive for COVID-19 but never had any symptoms, you are considered to be infectious from 2 days before your test was taken until 10 days after your test.**

Home Care

Most people with COVID-19 have mild illness and can recover at home. Here are steps that you can take to help you get better:

- Rest and drink plenty of fluids
- Take over-the-counter medicine such as acetaminophen (Tylenol®) to reduce fever and pain. Note that children younger than age 2 should not be given any over-the-counter cold medications without first speaking with a provider.

- Make a note of when your symptoms started and continue to monitor your health.

Seeking Medical Care

Stay in touch with your provider and seek medical care if your symptoms get worse. If you are age 65 years or older or have an [underlying medical condition](#) it is especially important to call your provider as you may be at a higher risk of serious illness.

Call 911 if there are emergency warning signs

- **Difficulty Breathing**
- **Pressure or Pain in Chest**
- **Bluish Lips or Face**
- **Confused or Hard to Wake**
- **Other Serious Symptoms**

People with emergency warning signs should call 911. If it's not urgent, call your provider before visiting.

PROTECT OTHERS

Follow the steps below to help prevent the disease from spreading to others in your home and your community.

Separate yourself from others in your home

- If you need to be in the same room as other people, set it up so that you can stay 6 feet apart if possible. It is important to stay away from people who are at [higher risk of serious illness](#).
- Use a separate bathroom. If this is not possible, disinfect the bathroom after use (see cleaning information [below](#)).
- Open windows or use a fan or an air conditioner in shared spaces in the home.
- Do not allow non-essential visitors.
- Do not handle pets or other animals.

Anyone who continues to be in close contact with you will need to stay in quarantine for longer.

Wear a facemask or cloth face cover when you are around others

- Wear a disposable facemask when you are around other people. If you do not have a facemask, wear a cloth face cover. Do not use either if you have trouble breathing, or are unable to remove it without help, or you have been told not to wear one by a medical provider.

- If you are not able to wear a facemask or face cover, then people who live with you should avoid being in the same room with you. If they must enter the room you are in, they should wear a facemask (or if they don't have one, a cloth face covering). After leaving the room, they should immediately clean their hands, then remove and dispose of their facemask, and clean their hands again.
- *Use masks and face coverings with caution with children.* Infants and children under 2 should not wear cloth face coverings. Those between the ages of 2 and 8 should use them under adult supervision to ensure that the child can breathe safely and avoid choking or suffocation.

Cover your coughs and sneezes

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw used tissues in a lined trash can after each use. Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer after you cough or sneeze.

Avoid sharing food or personal household items

- Do not prepare or serve food to others.
- Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets in your home.
- Make sure to wash your dishes, drinking glasses, and eating utensils with soap and water after each use.

Clean your hands often

- Wash your hands often, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; before eating or preparing food; and after touching your face mask or cover. Use soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub hands together for 30 seconds until they feel dry. Use soap and water if your hands are visibly dirty.

Clean and disinfect all “high-touch” surfaces every day

- Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces e.g. counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables.
- Clean and disinfect any surfaces that may have body fluids on them.
- Use household cleaning and disinfectant sprays or wipes. Be sure to follow the product label instructions.
- If caregivers and household contacts clean or come into contact with your body fluids or secretions (such as sweat, saliva, sputum, nasal mucus, vomit, urine, or diarrhea) they should wear a disposable facemask and gloves. After cleaning, they should remove and dispose of their gloves

first, clean their hands, then remove and dispose of their facemask, and clean their hands again.

TALK TO PUBLIC HEALTH - Contact Tracing

Contact tracing is a simple, confidential process that is being used to help slow the spread of COVID-19.

- If you test positive for COVID-19, you will receive a call from a public health specialist. Please do your part by taking the call and answering some questions about the places you have been and the people you have been around while you were infectious.
- The people you tell the specialist about will be contacted and asked to stay home to help prevent others from getting sick. They will not be told your name or contact information. The specialist will also answer any questions you may have and share information about services.

Length of quarantine period

- You need to stay in quarantine for 14 days from when you last had close contact with the infectious person. The infected person should follow [Home Isolation Instructions for People with COVID-19](#).
- If you continue to live with or care for the infected person, the amount of time you have to quarantine depends on the type of contact that you have - find the situation that is most like yours in the section "[How do I calculate the end date of my quarantine period](#)" at the end of this guidance.
- If you don't know when you were exposed to the infected person and you received a Public Health Emergency Quarantine Order, your last day of quarantine is 14 days from the date the order was issued.

Restrictions during quarantine

To prevent you from unintentionally spreading COVID-19 to uninfected people, you must restrict activities and limit all movements that may put you in contact with others during the quarantine period.

- Stay home. Do not go to work, school, or public areas. You may only leave your place of quarantine or enter another public or private place to get necessary medical care.
- Do not allow visitors.
- Separate yourself from others in your home (unless they are also in quarantine).
 - Stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. It is very important to stay away from people who are at higher risk of serious illness. This includes people who are age 65 years or older

or have a health problem such as a chronic disease or a weak immune system.

- Use a separate bathroom, if available.
- Stay at least 6 feet away from others. When this is not possible, wear a cloth face covering.
- Do not handle pets or other animals.
- Do not prepare or serve food to others.

Returning to work or school

- When your quarantine period ends, you can resume your usual activities, including returning to work and/or school. You should not need a letter from Public Health or a negative test to return to work or school.
- If you developed symptoms, you need to follow the [Home Isolation Instructions](#) for returning to work or school.

TESTING FOR COVID-19

As a close contact to someone with COVID-19, it is recommended that you get tested.

- To get a test, call your provider or visit www.yorkvillerox.com.
 - If you got an email from Public Health, take it with you in case the facility asks for proof that you are a contact to someone with COVID-19
 - Take precautions when you go to get the test, so you don't unintentionally infect other people. See [If you do have to go out for medical care or for COVID-19 testing](#) below.
- If your test result is positive:
 - It means that you have COVID-19
 - You need to follow the [Home Isolation Instructions for People with COVID-19](#).
 - You need to tell all of your close contacts to quarantine and give them these instructions.
- If your test result is negative:
 - You may still be infected, but it is too early to show on the test.
 - You need to stay in quarantine until 14 days after your last exposure to the infected person.
 - Monitor your symptoms and follow the instructions below.

MONITOR YOUR HEALTH

Know what to do if you develop symptoms

- It is important to monitor your health for [signs and symptoms of COVID-19](#) which may include the following: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache,

- sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, congestion or runny nose, or new loss of taste or smell. This list of symptoms is not all inclusive.
- If you develop any of these symptoms or any other symptoms that are concerning to you, consult your medical provider. Tell them that you are a contact to someone with COVID-19. If you are having serious symptoms such as difficulty breathing, feel pain or pressure in your chest, have bluish lips or face or are experiencing a new onset of confusion or difficulty waking up, call 911 or go to an emergency room.
 - Make a note of when your symptoms started and follow the guidance [Home Isolation Instructions for People with COVID-19](#).

Steps to take when getting medical care or COVID-19 testing

- Wear a surgical mask. If you don't have one, wear a cloth face covering.
 - Note: Infants and children under the age of 2 should not wear cloth face coverings. Children between the ages of 2 and 8 should use them but under adult supervision to ensure that the child can breathe safely and avoid choking or suffocation. A mask or cloth face covering should not be placed on anyone who has trouble breathing or is unable to remove it without assistance.
- Use a private vehicle if possible. If you cannot drive yourself, be sure to keep as much distance as possible between you and the driver, wear a cloth face covering, if possible, and leave windows down. You should not use public transportation.

TALK TO PUBLIC HEALTH - Contact Tracing

- If you have been in contact with someone with COVID-19, you may receive a call from a public health specialist. If you get a call, text or e-mail message from "Columbia, SC or dhec.sc.gov", please do your part by taking the call and answering some questions about your health and the places you have been.
- The specialist can answer your questions and provide information about services like how to get a COVID-19 test or find a provider or get help while you are in quarantine.

How to calculate when your quarantine period ends

You will need to stay in quarantine for 14 days from the date that you last had close contact with an infected person.

I. YOU HAVE NO FURTHER CONTACT WITH THE INFECTED PERSON

- A. Your last day of quarantine is 14 days from the date when you last had close contact with them.

Example:

Your last close contact with the infected person: January 1

+

14 Days

=

Your last day in quarantine: January 15

II. YOU CONTINUE TO HAVE CONTACT WITH THE INFECTED PERSON

For example, you live with and/or care for the person with COVID-19

- A. If you can avoid close contact, your last day of quarantine is 14 days from the date the infected person(s) in your household started to follow Home Isolation Instructions for People with COVID-19.

Example:

Infected person(s) started to follow Home Isolation Instructions: January 5

+

14 Day

=

Your last day in quarantine: January 19

- B. If you have close contact, with that person at any point, the 14-day quarantine period will have to restart from the last day that you had close contact.

Example:

You started quarantine: January 5

→

You had another close contact with infected person: January 8

+

14 Days

=

Your last day in quarantine: January 22

- C. If you cannot avoid close contact, your last day of quarantine is 14 days from the date that the infected person was told that they are "cleared" to stop their isolation.

Example:

Infected person cleared to stop isolation: January 15

+

14 Days

=

Your last date in quarantine: January 29

III. YOU RECEIVED A QUARANTINE ORDER BUT DON'T KNOW WHEN YOU WERE EXPOSED

A. Your last day of quarantine is 14 days from the date of issue on the Order.

Example:

Issue date on the quarantine order: January 20

+

14 Days

=

Your last date in quarantine: February 3



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Taking care of a child with Covid-19

This guidance is for people caring for children who have symptoms consistent with COVID-19. Your child may or may not have been tested for the virus and if they were tested, you may or may not yet have the results. Even so, given the number of people who are infected, a child with symptoms like those of COVID-19 should be cared for just like a confirmed case.

That means your household has to follow basic guidelines to avoid spread of COVID-19:

- The infected child must be “isolated” in the house for at least 10 days from when their symptoms first appeared AND at least 3 days (72 hours) after the fever has gone without the use of medications AND respiratory symptoms (such as cough and shortness of breath) have improved.
- If the child has no symptoms but has had a positive test for COVID-19, the minimum 10 day isolation period starts from the day of the test.

If symptoms appear during the isolation period of a child who started out asymptomatic, isolation must last for at least the 10 minimum required days plus 3 days following the point at which symptoms have abated and fever is gone without use of fever-reducing medication.

- Others in the household who have had close contact with the child while the child was infectious must self-quarantine at home for 14 days from the last close contact. The infectious period lasts from 2 days (48 hours) before symptoms appeared (or before a positive test if the child is asymptomatic) until the end of the child’s isolation period, as defined above.

If a household member (e.g. caregiver) continues to have unprotected contact with the child throughout the child's isolation period, the last day of quarantine for that person will be 14 days after the child is clear to stop their isolation.

- See these guidance documents for details about [isolation](#) and [quarantine](#).

1. STEPS TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS IN THE HOUSEHOLD FROM INFECTION.

The risk to children from COVID-19 appears to be much less than the risk to adults. Adults seem more likely to catch the virus and more likely to get very ill when they have it. This means that an important part of taking care of a child with COVID-19 is protecting others in your household from getting sick. Be especially careful to avoid spread if your household includes anyone over age 65, anyone with a chronic condition or disability that affects heart, lungs, or immune function or anyone who is pregnant.

Key steps to protect your family are:

- Have the child who is sick stay in their own room. If the child doesn't have their own room, choose a part of the house where they can be separated from other people.
 - You may have to use a screen or hang a sheet but find a way to put a barrier between the child and other household members.
- Have the child use a separate bathroom. If that is not possible, make sure the bathroom is wiped down after each use by the child.
- If the child is over two and does not have any chronic breathing problems, help them use a surgical mask any time other household members (including you) are around.
 - Children under 2 should never be masked.
 - Children 2-8 may wear a mask with adult assistance as long as the child does not have a condition that impairs breathing.
- Teach the child to use a tissue to cover a sneeze or cough and then throw it in the trash. Teach them to sneeze or cough into an elbow in case they don't have a tissue when they need it.
- Try to limit the child's direct care to a single care giver. Other household members can help in other ways, but it is best if only one person is regularly exposed to the child.
 - Ideally, the caregiver should have a protective mask and wear gloves while touching the child or handling their toys, bedding, dishes, and so on.
 - Even if the caregiver has used gloves, frequent handwashing is critical for a caregiver who is in and out of the child's room. The caregiver should avoid

- touching their own face, eyes, nose, or mouth unless their hands were just washed.
- Consider using disposable plates and utensils for the child's meals. If the child does use the same plates and utensils as the rest of the household, these items need to be washed in a dishwasher or with dish soap and hot water after each use (although they don't have to be washed separately).

These steps are absolutely critical regardless of how sick your child is. Remember that even a child with no symptoms who has tested positive for the virus can spread it to others and that your child needs you to be healthy to provide the care they need. You help your child when you protect yourself from the virus.

2. HOW TO PROVIDE CARE FOR A CHILD WITH MILD OR MODERATE SYMPTOMS

- Symptoms of COVID-19 may include the following: fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, congestion or runny nose, or new loss of taste or smell. This list of symptoms is not all inclusive.
- Please consult your medical provider about the need for testing and isolation for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.
- Pay attention to a fever even if you don't see other symptoms.
 - **If your child is under 3 months** and has a fever, call your doctor right away. If it's nighttime, call the emergency number for your provider or clinic. Any fever can be serious in a newborn.
 - **If your child is between 3 months and 3 years** and has a fever over 102.2°F, call your child's health provider.
 - **If your child is over 3** and has a fever over 102.2°F, use your judgment. If the child seems sick in other ways – they look sick and they are less active than usual – you may want to call their provider.
 - If you don't have a thermometer appropriate for use with a child, you can judge temperature just by feeling a young child's forehead. That won't give you a number, but you can often tell if the child is feverish.
 - Contact your child's medical provider when you observe (or when your child reports) any of the symptoms of COVID-19.
 - Ideally, the provider knows your child and can help you judge whether these symptoms sound like COVID-19.
 - Keep the child comfortable. Make sure the room they are in is not too hot or too cold.
 - Do make sure the child is not overdressed and in overly warm bedding. A young child can get overheated easily.
 - Make sure the child gets plenty of rest.

- The child does not have to be in bed all the time, but they should not be overly active. Do try to keep them away from other family members even if they are not in bed.
- If the child is experiencing pain or feeling feverish, you can use an age-appropriate dose of acetaminophen (Tylenol or a generic brand) to help with symptoms and fever.
- Do not use other over-the-counter medications unless your provider suggests them. ○ Provide lots of fluids for the child to drink. Staying hydrated is key.
- Don't use sports drinks or other sugary beverages for younger children – the sugar in those drinks can make dehydration worse by causing diarrhea.

■ If the child has had diarrhea, which does sometimes occur with COVID-19, their provider may recommend a special rehydration drink (with electrolytes) made specifically for kids.

- ■ Good choices to keep your child hydrated are water, soup, popsicles and flavored gelatin. Avoid caffeine drinks with children of any age.
- Enlist other friends and neighbors to help you get through the isolation and quarantine period. They cannot visit, but they can drop off food, diapers, toys, books or games for the child and other things you need.
- Your child can't play with other children during this period but do encourage other families to have their children "visit" over the phone or on a tablet or laptop if your child is old enough to miss contact with other children.

3. WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CHILD DEVELOPS MORE SERIOUS SYMPTOMS

Although a very small percentage of children have required hospital care for COVID-19 (compared to 20% of adults who become ill) the illness can take a serious turn in children. It's important to know what this might look like and to have a plan of action should it happen to your child. Your child's provider can help you work out specifics about who to call and where to go; what follows are general guidelines.

- The children at greatest risk of serious illness due to COVID-19 are children with special health care needs, discussed below, and children under age 1. It makes good sense, therefore, to be in touch with your child's provider and have a plan in place if symptoms show up in an infant.
- You will probably be a good judge of serious illness in your child – any big change in the child's appearance or behavior should be a warning.

- Specific symptoms to look out for are high fever, worsening shortness of breath (you may see the child's chest go up and down), confusion or sudden drowsiness. Call your provider right away if any of these symptoms appear.
 - It will probably be possible to continue caring for your child at home, but it's best to review the situation with your provider and make sure hospital care is not needed.
- If your child has to struggle to breathe, stops being able to walk or talk or begins to turn blue, call 911. Tell the dispatcher how old your child is so they can send an ambulance with the right equipment. Also tell them that your child has had symptoms of COVID-19 so the EMTs that come can wear appropriate personal protective equipment.

4. WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CHILD HAS SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

Children with significant medical needs

Children with special health care needs may be especially vulnerable to serious illness if they become infected with COVID-19 if their condition involves impaired lung function or reduced immune function. Even if a condition does not affect breathing or immunity, medications and other factors related to care of a child's special health need may make COVID-19 care more complex.

- These factors make prevention particularly important
 - If someone in your household must go outside the home to work each day, it may make sense for that person to stay elsewhere during the COVID-19 outbreak. If that is feasible for your family, it can reduce the chance of that household member bringing COVID-19 into the home.
 - If that is not feasible, the household member should take heightened precautions to avoid contagion.
 - Anyone who comes to the home to care for your child, including private duty nurses, should take heightened precautions, particularly handwashing before providing care to your child and using appropriate infection prevention measures as indicated by type of care provided.
 - If there are people who enter and exit the home, try to isolate the child in a separate area that can be protected from contamination.

- Try to limit your child's care to one primary household caregiver, who should avoid going out of the home at any time if at all possible. That person should be very careful to wash hands every time they enter the child's area.
- Advance preparation is also important. Try to identify an alternative caregiver who will be able and is trained to care for your child should you become ill. Planning will also help you and others care for your child should the child become infected.
- Make sure you have an updated emergency plan for your child, outlining the child's conditions and medical history and detailing medications taken, allergies and other contraindications, durable medical equipment used by the child and all medical providers. Make sure the plan includes contact information for the child's primary care provider and most important specialists.
- If your child does show symptoms of COVID-19, contact the child's primary care provider and key specialists right away.
- While waiting to hear back from your child's physicians, you should presume that your child has COVID-19 and follow guidance outlined in section 1.
- Because your child's health conditions are unique, you should follow the advice of your child's specialists concerning next steps.
- If you are advised to go to the office or hospital, they will tell you how to travel safely to minimize the risk of exposing other people to this virus.

Children with emotional, behavioral or developmental needs

If your child's primary special need is emotional, behavioral or developmental, your major challenges will probably have less to do with medical management and more to do with the behavioral changes required for effective isolation of a child with COVID-19.

- Your first challenge may be finding out that your child is ill. Some children have a hard time recognizing their own physical sensations. Others are unable to describe what they feel or even articulate that they are not well. If this is true of your child, you are probably used to watching for signs of sickness.
- Symptoms of COVID-19 are listed on Page 2 of this document, but also watch for fast breathing, and listlessness or less activity than is usual for your child.
- You may see clues in your child's behavior. For example, refusing a food your child usually likes may indicate a sore throat.

- Your judgment, based on past experience with your child, will be key to figuring out that your child is ill and how it is affecting them.
- Once you have spotted the symptoms of COVID-19 and talked to your child's provider, the next challenge will be organizing your home to protect other family members while you keep your child resting and hydrating.
 - You may have difficulty persuading your child to wear a mask, wash their hands and keep a safe 6-foot distance from other people.
 - ■ Offer a developmentally appropriate explanation of what COVID-19 is and why all these changes are needed. There are a number of social stories available online that may be helpful (see, for example: <https://www.autism.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Feeling-Sick-COVID-19.pdf>).
 - ■ Offer clear, concrete guidance about each of the behavioral changes needed to protect household members. Here too, online resources can help, or you can make up your own social story about handwashing, wearing a mask and so on.
- Follow the medical management guidelines in Section 2, above, but modify as appropriate to accommodate your child's behavioral or developmental needs.
- No-contact thermometers may not be as precise as other thermometers, but if they are less likely to upset your child, they are okay to use. Even a kiss on the forehead or a hand on the back of the neck to judge if your child has a fever is adequate if that is all your child will tolerate.
- Find a way to give medicine that works for your child if they won't tolerate pills or liquids. Mashing medicines in food may work. Some parents find suppositories are easier to manage than medicine taken orally in any form.
- Develop a schedule for daily activities so your child has some sense of structure and predictability as they recover. It may help your child adjust to both preventive measures and elements of their own care if they know these activities fit into a day that will include things they enjoy as well.

For all parents caring for children with COVID-19, part of the message is TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF. This means taking precautions by wearing a mask, using gloves as needed, maintaining social distancing whenever that is feasible as you care for your child. But it also means recruiting other household members to take over household chores, asking friends or neighbors to pick up groceries for you and leave them outside your door, and staying in touch with your own network of friends by phone or Internet.