

[Patient Education Handouts \(/handouts.aspx\)](#)

2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)



[SPANISH \(/HANDOUT.ASPX?\)](#)



PRINT



SHARE



PDF



CUSTOM

[GBOSID=535625\)](#)

[HANDOUT](#)

COVID-19: a new coronavirus

Symptoms of COVID-19

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Who is at risk?

- Older adults
- People who have serious chronic medical conditions like:
 - Heart disease
 - Diabetes
 - Lung disease
 - Suppressed immune systems

How to protect your family

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer. Look for one that is 60% or higher alcohol-based.
- Reduce close contact with others by practicing "social distancing." This means staying home as much as possible and avoiding public places where close contact with others is likely.
- Keep your kids away from others who are sick or keep them home if they are ill.
- Teach kids to cough and sneeze into a tissue (make sure to throw it away after each use!) or to cough and sneeze into their arm or elbow, not their hands.

- Clean and disinfect your home as usual using regular household cleaning sprays or wipes.
- Wash stuffed animals or other plush toys, following manufacturer's instructions in the warmest water possible and dry them completely.
- Avoid touching your face; teach your children to do the same.
- Avoid travel to highly infected areas.
- Follow local and state guidance on travel restrictions.

How to care for someone in your family with COVID-19

- **Separate family members with COVID-19 from others as much as possible.** The person with the virus should stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. Ideally, they should use a separate bathroom, if available. Limit visitors in the house.
- **Avoid contact with pets.** This includes petting, snuggling, being kissed or licked, and sharing food.
- **Call ahead before visiting the doctor.** This will help them take steps to keep other people from getting infected or exposed.
- **Wear a facemask.** The CDC only recommends facemasks for people who have symptoms of COVID-19, not for people who are healthy. Healthcare workers and anyone taking care of someone with COVID-19 should wear facemasks.
- **Avoid sharing personal household items.** Don't share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets in the home. After using these items, they should be washed thoroughly with soap and water.
- **Extra cleaning for all "high-touch" surfaces.** These include counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables. Also, clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them. Use a household cleaning spray or wipes and follow the instructions on the label.
- **Monitor symptoms.** Call your doctor right away if the illness gets worse.

Note: The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) agrees with the World Health Organization about the use of ibuprofen during the COVID-19 pandemic. Right now, there is not enough evidence to recommend you avoid using ibuprofen, unless you have an underlying medical condition that makes ibuprofen less safe. Using acetaminophen is a reasonable and safe option. In children, the goal should be to improve their overall comfort, monitor their activity, look for signs of serious illness, and make sure they drink enough liquids.

The AAP recommends parents talk with their child's pediatrician about the correct dose before using any medication. Use a medication syringe or dropper to measure the correct amount because they are more reliable than a measuring spoon.

Dealing with school and child care closings

- **Read books with your child.** It's not only fun, but reading together strengthens your bond with your child AND helps their development.
- **Make time for active play.** Bring out the blocks, balls, jump ropes and buckets and let the creativity go. Play games that kids of all ages can play, like tag or duck duck goose. Let your kids make up new games. Encourage older kids to make up a workout or dance to keep them moving.
- **Keep an eye on media time.** Whenever possible, play video games or go online with your child to keep that time structured and limited. If kids are missing their school friends or other family, try video chats to stay in touch.

Talking to children about COVID-19

- **Simple reassurance.** Remind children that researchers and doctors are learning as much as they can, as quickly as they can, about the virus and are taking steps to keep everyone safe.
- **Give them control.** It's also a great time to remind your children of what they can do to help – washing their hands often, coughing into a tissue or their sleeves, and getting enough sleep.
- **Watch for signs of anxiety.** Children may not have the words to express their worry, but you may see signs of it. They may get cranky, be more clingy, have trouble sleeping, or seem distracted. Keep the reassurance going and try to stick to your normal routines.
- **Monitor their media.** Keep young children away from frightening images they may see on TV, social media, computers, etc. For older children, talk together about what they are hearing on the news and correct any misinformation or rumors you may hear.
- **Be a good role model.** COVID-19 doesn't discriminate and neither should we. While COVID-19 started in Wuhan, China, it doesn't mean that having Asian ancestry – or any other ancestry – makes someone more susceptible to the virus or more contagious. Stigma and discrimination hurt everyone by creating fear or anger towards others. When you show empathy and support to those who are ill, your children will too.

Stay informed

Any websites, brand names, products, or manufacturers are mentioned for informational and identification purposes only and do not imply an endorsement by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). The AAP is not responsible for the content of external resources. Information was current at the time of publication. The information contained in this publication should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances. Updated 3/22/20.

Subscribe to Pediatric Patient Education
(https://shop.aap.org/Pediatric_Patient_Education/)

Purchase your individual subscription

[Subscribe \(https://shop.aap.org/Pediatric_Patient_Education/\)](https://shop.aap.org/Pediatric_Patient_Education/)



Read Sample handout

Check out our featured handout

[Read \(/handout.aspx?gbosid=156543\)](/handout.aspx?gbosid=156543)

DISCLAIMER: The information contained in this publication should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.