

Family Education Sheet

Caring for Your Child at Home While Waiting for COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019) Test Results (For PPOC Patients)



Boston
Children's
Hospital

PPOC
Pediatric Physicians' Organization at Children's

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www.bostonchildrens.org/familyeducation

Your child is currently being tested or has been recommended to have testing for COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019), a virus that causes mild to severe respiratory illness symptoms like a fever, cough and shortness of breath. This family education sheet talks about important steps you should take at home while waiting for the test results.

How long will it take to get the test results back?

It can take a few days to get your child's test results.

How will I find out the results?

Your health care team will call you with the results.

What symptoms should I watch for at home?

Watch for:

- Temperature/fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- New loss of smell or taste
- Shortness of breath or breathing problems
- Chills
- Muscle or body aches

If these symptoms get worse, call your primary care provider. Let them know that you are on self-isolation (staying at home and away from others) and are waiting for COVID-19 test results from Boston Children's.

If it is an emergency, call 911 or your local emergency services number. Tell them that your child is having COVID-19-like symptoms.

When should I call my child's health care provider?

Call if your child:

- Has a fever higher than 100.4°F/ 38°C
- Refuses to drink fluids
- 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 a rash
- 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.

How can I help my child to feel better at home?

- Have your child **rest, eat healthy food** and **drink a lot of water**.
- **If your child has a fever**, use medicines to help lower it (as directed on the label or by your pediatrician).
- **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 is over 100.4°F/ 38°C.

What steps should my family take while we wait for the results?

Stay at home and away from others

- **Self-isolate:** Your child and your family should stay home and away from others to lower the chance of spreading the illness.
- **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 at your front door 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 been tested for COVID-19. Caregivers should wear personal protective equipment, like gloves, eye protection and face masks.

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 face mask or cloth face covering** (like a bandana or scarf) that covers their nose and mouth when they are around people, including you. If they can't wear a face mask, 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. Wash your hands with soap and water if they look dirty.

- Everyone in the house should **avoid touching their eyes, nose or mouth** unless they have just cleaned their hands.

Can I breastfeed my child?

- If your child who was tested is an infant and you are breastfeeding, **you can still breastfeed your baby.**
 - Be sure to wash your hands and your chest area well with soap and warm water before and after you touch your baby.

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 medical face mask and disposable gloves if possible.** You can also wear a bandana or scarf if you do not have a medical face mask. After cleaning:
 - Remove gloves and throw away.
 - Wash your hands right away with soap and water or use an alcohol-based sanitizer.
 - Remove face mask 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.

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

For more information

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

Visit Boston Children's COVID-19 website:
childrenshospital.org/conditions-and-treatments/conditions/c/coronavirus
[us](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):
[cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html)

CDC: If You Are Sick or Caring for Someone
[cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/index.html](https://www.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://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/breastfeeding-special-circumstances/maternal-or-infant-illnesses/covid-19-and-breastfeeding.html)

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