



# Coronavirus Pandemic: Keeping Children Safe

## How can I prevent coronavirus infection/COVID-19 in my child?

There are no medicines or pills presently available to prevent coronavirus infection in any person. DO NOT believe claims made on social media. At present, all available vaccines are approved for use in adults only. Consistently, practice hand washing, proper wearing of well-fitted masks, and physical distancing, and guide your child to do the same. Keep children away from public functions and social gatherings. Encourage playing outdoors with other children, and ensure that all children wear masks consistently, and that they maintain physical distance while playing.



## My child has fever. Can it be COVID-19?

Children get fever from many causes, and as they grow up, they gradually develop relative immunity to common illnesses. However, it is difficult for doctors too, to know the difference, hence, in every fever/cough, in the current pandemic times, COVID-19 is considered a possibility, especially if a family member has been infected with coronavirus.

## When do we test a child for coronavirus?

Do not rush for testing!

- Test if family members are positive
- Test if child is symptomatic
- Test if fever continues beyond 3 days



## Is a mask necessary to be worn by children?

- Yes! Masks need to be worn by all children above the age of 5 years
- Children <5 years need not use a mask due to safety reasons

## Home care for sick children.

- Record temperature every 6 hours
- If fever is >100°F, give paracetamol 10–15 mg/kg/dose
- Give plenty of liquids to drink
- Give soft and light food such as khichdi and curd
- Maintain hygiene, bathe daily and wash hands regularly
- Can give Vitamin C and Zinc rich foods, and supplements if available
- No role in children, for any other medicines!

## When to seek urgent medical attention?

- High fever lasting beyond 4 or 5 days
- Decreased oral intake by child
- Child becoming lethargic
- Increasing respiratory rate (i.e. breaths per minute)
- Oxygen saturation dropping below 95% at home



## What is 'Multi-system Inflammatory Syndrome in Children' (MIS-C) ?

In some cases, after 2-6 weeks of asymptomatic or symptomatic COVID-19 infection, a 'Multi-system Inflammatory Syndrome in Children' (MIS-C) may be seen, which occurs due to the body's own immune system getting dysregulated. It is a treatable condition with a good outcome if diagnosed early. Hence, parents need to be watchful for signs and symptoms of MIS-C while caring for sick children while they are recovering.

## Symptoms

Not all children have the same symptoms

- Fever that lasts 24 hours or longer
- Vomiting, Diarrhoea, Pain in the stomach
- Skin rash • Feeling unusually tired
- Fast heartbeat, Rapid breathing • Red eyes
- Headache, dizziness or lightheadedness
- Enlarged lymph nodes in armpit or neck



## Emergency warning signs of MIS-C

- Severe stomach pain
- Difficulty in breathing
- Pale, grey or blue-coloured skin, lips or nail beds
- New confusion
- Inability to wake up or stay awake