

Discharge from hospital after having coronavirus (COVID-19)

What is coronavirus?

It is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus strain that first emerged in China in December 2019. Coronavirus was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization on 11 March 2020.

In humans, several coronaviruses are known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more severe disease. Typical symptoms are fever and a cough that may progress to pneumonia (shortness of breath and difficulty breathing). Generally, symptoms are more severe in older people and people with pre-existing conditions. Most cases of coronavirus in children appear to be mild.

If your child has coronavirus what does that mean?

Most children who have coronavirus have a fever and a continuous dry cough, but symptoms can be different. Many children have no symptoms at all. The severity and length of symptoms for children can also vary, but symptoms usually get better within 7 days. Most children who have coronavirus will not need to stay in hospital and can be looked after at home. Other patients will need monitoring in hospital, and a very small number will need treatment in intensive care.

What happens once your child leaves hospital?

At this point your child is considered well enough to leave hospital. They will have been prescribed medication if it is needed. If your child does not need any prescribed medication, you should be able to manage their symptoms at home. Make sure your child stays hydrated, and give them paracetamol if they have a temperature. The cough may persist for several weeks, even though the virus having been cleared.

If your child is not getting better, or is getting worse, it is important for them to be re-assessed by calling 111 or, in an emergency, calling 999. Children's Emergency Departments (A&E) are open 24/7 as usual and continue to provide care.

What if your child feels unwell again?

Monitor your child's symptoms regularly. Children often feel more unwell when their body temperature goes up, and they feel better once their fever has settled (with or without paracetamol). The next page gives more details regarding warning signs that may mean your child is getting more unwell.

If you have any query about your child's symptoms please go to

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A special coronavirus message for parents or carers

When your child is ill or injured it is very difficult to decide if, or when, to call your GP, NHS 111 or go to the Emergency Department. During the current situation, and while the Government is asking everyone to stay at home, it can be confusing to know what to do. Here is some guidance.

You should go to the Emergency Department and/or call 999 immediately if	
<p>Appearance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pale / mottled / ashen / blue colour • Collapsed / unresponsive / loss of consciousness • No obvious pulse or heartbeat • Severe allergic reaction <p>Behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extreme irritability / pain / sleepiness (can be woken but falls asleep immediately) • Seizure / jerking movements / fit 	<p>Breathing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sucking in and out between ribs • Flaring nostrils • Extremely fast breathing • Noisy breathing <p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bleeding from an injury, that doesn't stop after 10 minutes of pressure.
You should go to the Emergency Department if	
<p>Appearance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dizziness / feeling faint • Rash that does not fade when you press it • Behaviour • Severe constant tummy pain <p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burn • Possible broken bone • Feels abnormally cold to the touch 	<p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swallowed foreign objects (especially magnets/batteries) • Temperature higher than 38C in a baby younger than three months old • Your child has special healthcare needs and you have a plan that tells you to go to the Emergency Department • Expressing suicidal / significant self-harm thoughts
You should call your GP if	
<p>Appearance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mild / mood allergic reaction (known or suspected) • New rash that fades when you press on it <p>Behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mild irritability / sleepier than normal • Severe tummy pain that comes and goes • Vomiting and diarrhoea • Not passed urine (peed) for more than 12 hours 	<p>Breathing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wheezing / fast breathing <p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temperature over 39C (age 3-12 months) • Temperature over 38C for more than seven days • Accidental overdose of medication of other substances • Ear pain for more than two days • Emotional distress that can't be reassured
You should check with NHS 111 or your community pharmacist if	
<p>Appearance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pink / red eyes <p>Behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ear pain for less than two days • Mild tummy pain that comes and goes 	<p>Breathing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cough • Runny nose <p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temperature over 38C for less than seven days

The team looking after your child might want to give you some specific guidance below:

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For a medical emergency, dial 999 immediately.

Can your child spread coronavirus to friends and family?

There is a risk that other members of your household, or others that have been in close contact with your child over the last two weeks, have been exposed to the virus. Each member of your household, and/or carers, should follow the Government's isolation guidance, [w: www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

Please continue to monitor this guidance as it is updated regularly as more evidence becomes available. This will make sure you have the most up to date information on when it is safe to end your household isolation. Please note that persistent cough alone does not mean someone must continue to self-isolate beyond the duration advised by the Government.

How do you manage your child's nappies?

In some patients, the virus can be found in the stool (poo). If your child is wearing nappies, strict hygiene measures should be used when handling them:

- Change nappies in a designated area away from playing areas and the kitchen.
- Clean your child's skin with disposable wipes.
- Dispose of your child's nappy inside a plastic bag.
- Wash your hands immediately after every nappy change.

Can your child get coronavirus again?

This is currently uncertain. There have been a few reports of possible re-infection, but the circumstances of these are unclear.

Will your child have a follow-up?

If your child is ready for discharge there should be no need to be followed up in hospital (unless they are regularly followed up for other medical issues). Your doctor may decide that a follow-up is needed in the next few days, and this may be arranged with the Evelina London @home team or the general paediatrics team. You might be asked to wear a face mask during the hospital or home visits.

Is there any other advice?

- Keep your child's hands clean (with soap and water), especially after using public transport or if you have been in public areas. You can use sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available.
- Always carry tissues and use them to catch your child's sneeze or cough, then bin the tissue and wash your hands or use sanitiser gel.
- Try to avoid your child touching their eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid unnecessary contact with people who are unwell.

Does your child need to wear a facemask?

Facemasks may reduce the chance of passing coronavirus on to other people, so your child may be given a mask to wear as you travel home (to be used if they can tolerate it). They do not need to wear it once you are home.

Further sources of information?

The Government is updating their guidance regularly, [w: www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus).

Evelina London Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's medicines, please speak to the staff caring for them or contact our helpline.

t: 020 7188 3003, Monday to Friday, 10am-5pm **e:** letstalkmedicines@gstt.nhs.uk

Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). To make a complaint, contact the complaints department.

t: 020 7188 8801 (PALS) **e:** pals@gstt.nhs.uk
t: 020 7188 3514 (complaints) **e:** complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk

Language and accessible support services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch.

t: 020 7188 8815 **e:** languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk

NHS 111

This service offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day.

t: 111 **w:** www.111.nhs.uk

NHS website

This website gives information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you take control of your health and wellbeing.

w: www.nhs.uk

Get involved and have your say: become a member of the Trust

Members of Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust contribute to the organisation on a voluntary basis. We count on them for feedback, local knowledge and support. Membership is free and it is up to you how much you get involved. To find out more, please get in touch.

t: 0800 731 0319 **e:** members@gstt.nhs.uk **w:** www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/membership

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www.gov.uk

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