



If your child has symptoms of COVID-19

Children and COVID-19

This advice is for babies and children up to the end of secondary school, usually the age of 18.

Keep your child at home

Do not send your child to school or childcare if they have symptoms of COVID-19. You may need to isolate them from other people. It will depend on their symptoms.

When to get urgent medical help

If your child becomes very unwell quickly, it's unlikely that this is caused by COVID-19. Their symptoms may be because of another illness.

If your baby is under 3 months old and has a high temperature (38 degrees Celsius or more), phone 999 or 112. If your baby is aged 3 to 6 months and has a high temperature, phone your GP immediately.

If your child has common symptoms of COVID-19

Common symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- a temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or more
- a new cough - this can be any kind of cough, not just dry
- loss or changed sense of taste or smell
- shortness of breath

If your child has common symptoms of COVID-19:

1. [Isolate your child from other people](#) - this means keeping them in a room on their own and completely avoiding contact with other people, as much as possible.
2. [Phone a GP](#) - they will tell you if your child needs a [COVID-19 test](#).
3. Everyone your child lives with should [restrict their movements](#). This means not going to school, childcare or work [until it is safe to do so](#).
4. [Treat your child at home for their symptoms](#).

Your child should only leave your home to have a test or to see your GP. Phone your GP first. Do not bring your child to your GP surgery unless they ask you to.

If your child has other symptoms not commonly associated with COVID-19

Less common symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- sore throat
- headaches
- feeling sick or vomiting

If your child has any of these symptoms keep them at home for at least 48 hours. It's unlikely they have COVID-19, but they could be a sign of another infectious illness.

The people your child lives with do not need to restrict their movements as long as they feel OK.

After 48 hours it's OK to send your child back to school or childcare as long as:

- their symptoms do not get worse
- they do not develop new symptoms
- they have not had paracetamol or ibuprofen during these 48 hours - this may hide a fever if they have one
- no one else they live with is ill or has tested positive for COVID-19

Runny nose or sneezing

If your child only has a runny nose or is sneezing, it is OK to send them to school.

[Read more advice on a runny nose or sneeze and why it's OK to send your child to school or childcare.](#)

If your child has diarrhoea

If your child has [diarrhoea](#), they should stay at home.

They should not go to school until they have not had diarrhoea for 48 hours.

The people your child lives with do not need to restrict their movements as long as they feel OK.

Diarrhoea is not a common sign of COVID-19. But it is a symptom of infections. They could pass this infection to other children.

If your child has a breathing condition that has become worse

If your child has an existing breathing condition that has recently become worse

- [Isolate your child from other people.](#)
- Phone your GP.
- Everyone your child lives with should [restrict their movements.](#)

If your child has undiagnosed symptoms but does not need a COVID-19 test

Sometimes your GP may not know why your child is unwell. They may be unable to diagnose their symptoms. They may also decide that your child does not need a COVID-19 test, based on their symptoms.

If this happens, your child should behave as if they have COVID-19. This is to keep others safe. It cannot be certain that they your child does not have the virus. They'll need to continue to isolate from other people.

They will need to stay in isolation until both of these apply:

- they have not had a high temperature (38 degrees Celsius or over) for 5 days
- it has been 10 days since they first developed symptoms