

Coronavirus and Babies

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When it comes to coronavirus and COVID-19, parents are understandably concerned how it may affect their newborns and toddlers. Here are answers to some of the most common questions about coronavirus and young children:

Does coronavirus infect children?

Yes, coronavirus can infect babies and children. The good news is that most children have very mild symptoms, and some have no symptoms at all. Researchers are still trying to understand why children seem to have less serious disease than adults.

Can children spread coronavirus?

Yes, children can spread COVID-19 to caregivers, friends, and relatives without knowing they are infected or having any symptoms. This is one reason social distancing is so important for kids, to stop the spread of the disease to elderly people. A good way to think about social distancing is to behave as if you already are infected and don't want to spread disease. This is also true for babies, if there's any risk of exposure.



Do young children have the same symptoms as adults with COVID-19?

Yes, we know that children can experience the same symptoms as adults with the disease, although the symptoms are generally milder than adults. Children can have fever, cough, a runny nose, and even vomiting and diarrhea. As these symptoms are common to many seasonal childhood illnesses (like influenza, adenovirus, rhinovirus, and parainfluenza), there is no way to know just by examining a child that they have COVID-19.

Should we test all sick kids for COVID-19?

No, it is not recommended to test all people with mild symptoms for COVID-19, including children. The recommendations are to stay at home, nursing the child as you normally would, unless their symptoms are worrisome. A mild runny nose or low-grade temperature in a happy, playful child should not be cause for alarm. Many pediatric offices around the country are doing telemedicine visits with their patients in order to help families feel safe while still maintaining social distance. These visits can be done over a cell phone in many cases.

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What about children with chronic medical conditions?

There is no question that COVID-19 can cause severe disease even in babies and young kids. Parents and caregivers of children who have weak immune systems have to be extra cautious with social distancing, hand-washing, and the routine disinfecting of surfaces. Caregivers are encouraged to check in with the child's physician frequently to know if any recommendations have changed. All chronic medications are to be taken as prescribed. Parents should do their best to inventory medications and make sure prescriptions are refilled on time.

References

1. American Academy of Pediatrics. [Children with COVID-19 Impacted Less Severely Than Adults: Study.](#)
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [COVID-19 and Children.](#)