

# HOW TO CARE FOR A CHILD WITH COVID-19 AT HOME: ADVICE FOR CAREGIVERS

Children who have mild COVID-19 symptoms are able to stay at home with a caregiver throughout their recovery without needing hospitalization.

If you are caring for a child who has or may have COVID-19, it is important to follow the steps below to protect yourself and others in the home, as well as those in your community.



## SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

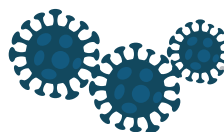
- ▶ Fever
- ▶ Cough
- ▶ Difficulty breathing

## MONITOR YOUR CHILD FOR SYMPTOMS

- ▶ Monitor your child's **symptoms** as directed by your healthcare provider or **Public Health Authority**.
- ▶ Watch for worsening symptoms, such as fast breathing, difficulty breathing, confusion, an inability to recognize you, chills from fever or fever that will not come down with fever-reducing medication (e.g. ibuprofen, acetaminophen) for more than 12 hours.
- ▶ **If your child develops severe symptoms, call 911 or your local emergency number**
- ▶ If calling an ambulance, tell the dispatcher that the child has/may have COVID-19. If going to the hospital in a private vehicle, call ahead to the hospital and let them know that the child has/may have COVID-19.

## KEEP HANDS CLEAN

- ▶ **Wash your hands** and those of your child **often** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after any type of contact with the child (e.g. changing diapers) and after removing gloves.
- ▶ If soap and water are not available and if your hands do not look dirty, use an alcohol-based sanitizer (ABHS) that contains at least 60% alcohol. If hands look dirty, remove dirt with a wet wipe first, then use ABHS.
- ▶ Dry hands with disposable paper towels.
- ▶ If not available, use a reusable towel and replace it when it becomes wet. Do not share.
- ▶ Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands and encourage your child not to touch their face, either.



## AVOID SPREADING INFECTION TO OTHERS

- ▶ Your child should remain in your home or in a monitored outdoor space, should not play with friends or go to school or to public areas, and should not be within 2 metres of others if possible.
- ▶ Encourage the child to use tissues or cough/sneeze into their elbow to decrease the spread of respiratory droplets
- ▶ Do not share personal items with the child, such as toothbrushes, towels, bed linen, utensils or electronic devices.
- ▶ Do not share food and drinks.
- ▶ Use a separate bathroom from the child if possible. If not possible, put the toilet lid down before flushing.
- ▶ **For breastfeeding mothers:** given the health benefits to your child from breastfeeding, it is recommended that you continue breastfeeding.
  - If you are feeding with formula or expressed milk, sterilize the equipment carefully before each use and do not share bottles or a breast pump.
- ▶ Prevent contact with animals, as there have been several reports of people transmitting COVID-19 to their pets.

## KEEP YOUR ENVIRONMENT CLEAN

- ▶ Follow instructions for the safe use and disposal or laundering of face masks provided by your Public Health Authority.
- ▶ Place used gloves and other contaminated items in a lined container, secure the contents and dispose of them with other household waste.
- ▶ Place possibly contaminated laundry into a container with a plastic liner and do not shake. Wash with regular laundry soap and hot water (60-90°C), and dry well. Clothing and linens belonging to the child can be washed with other laundry. Gloves and a non-medical **masks** or facial coverings (e.g. homemade cloth mask, dust mask, bandana) should be worn when in direct contact with contaminated laundry.
- ▶ To disinfect, use only **approved hard-surface disinfectants** that have a Drug Identification Number (DIN). A DIN is an 8-digit number given by Health Canada that confirms the disinfectant product is approved and safe for use in Canada.

- ▶ When approved hard surface disinfectants are not available, for household disinfection, a diluted bleach solution can be prepared in accordance with the instructions on the label, or in a ratio of 5 millilitres (mL) of bleach per 250 mL of water OR 20 mL of bleach per litre of water. This ratio is based on bleach containing 5% sodium hypochlorite, to give a 0.1% sodium hypochlorite solution. Follow instructions for **proper handling of household (chlorine) bleach**.
- ▶ If they can withstand the use of liquids for disinfection, high-touch electronic devices (e.g. keyboards, touch screens) may be disinfected with 70% alcohol at least daily.
- ▶ Wearing a face mask, including a non-medical mask or facial covering, may trap respiratory droplets and stop them from contaminating surfaces - but wearing a mask does not reduce the need for cleaning.

## PROTECT YOURSELF

- ▶ Only one healthy person should provide care for the child, but everyone in your home should follow this guidance.
- ▶ People who are at higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19 should not care for a child with COVID-19. These include elderly persons, those with chronic medical conditions (e.g. heart disease, diabetes) or compromised immune systems.
- ▶ Some people may transmit COVID-19 even though they do not show any symptoms. If you need to be within 2 metres of the child, wear disposable gloves, eye protection and a medical mask, if available. If not available, use a non-medical **mask** or facial covering (e.g. homemade cloth mask, dust mask, bandana).

## MONITOR YOURSELF FOR SYMPTOMS

- ▶ Monitor yourself for symptoms and follow any advice provided by your local **public health authority** about **quarantine (self-isolating)**.
- ▶ If you develop even mild symptoms, **isolate** yourself as quickly as possible and contact your local **public health authority** for further instructions.

## MAINTAIN THESE SUPPLIES

- Medical **masks**, if available and tolerable, for the child and the caregiver. If not available, use non-medical masks or facial covering (e.g. homemade cloth mask, dust mask, bandana)
- Eye protection (face shield or goggles) for use by caregiver
- Disposable gloves (do not re-use) for use by caregiver
- Disposable paper towels
- Tissues
- Waste container with plastic liner
- Thermometer
- Over the counter medication to reduce fever (e.g. ibuprofen or acetaminophen)
- Running water
- Hand soap
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol
- Dish soap
- Regular laundry soap
- Regular household cleaning products
- One-step cleaner/disinfectant
- Hard-surface disinfectant, or if not available, concentrated (5%) liquid bleach and a separate container for dilution
- Alcohol prep wipes or appropriate cleaning products for high-touch electronics



**WE CAN ALL DO OUR  
PART IN PREVENTING THE  
SPREAD OF COVID-19. FOR  
MORE INFORMATION, VISIT**

**Canada.ca/coronavirus**  
or contact  
**1-833-784-4397**

