

Advice for parents/carers in Northern Ireland during coronavirus

It can be confusing to know what to do when your child is unwell during the coronavirus pandemic. Remember that the NHS is still providing safe care.

GP practices and hospitals have made changes to help reduce the risk of infection. Only one parent/carer will be able to attend A&E with their child. Please use the hand sanitisers provided, wear a face covering in enclosed spaces and maintain social distancing. **Remember: if your child is unwell, seek advice and medical attention.**

Here is some advice to help:



RED

If your child has any of the following signs:

- Pale, mottled (blotchy) skin that feels unusually cold.
- Severe breathing difficulty – long pauses in their breathing, irregular breathing, starts going blue, or is too breathless to talk / eat / drink.
- A fit / seizure (unless these are expected).
- Becomes extremely distressed (crying for a very long time despite distraction), is confused, sleepy all the time and difficult to wake up or not responding even when awake.
- Has a rash that does not disappear when a glass is lightly pressed against the skin.
- Under 3 months of age with a temperature of 38°C / 100.4°F or above (unless fever in the 48 hours following vaccinations and no other RED or AMBER features).
- Pain in the testicles, especially in teenage boys.
- The child has seriously harmed themselves and needs medical help.
- **If you are frightened because your child looks very unwell.**

You need urgent help:

Go to the nearest A&E department or call 999



AMBER

If your child has any of the following signs:

- Finding it hard to breathe, including: drawing in of the muscles below their lower ribs, at their neck or between their ribs.
- Seems dehydrated (sunken eyes, drowsy or no wee passed for 12 hours).
- Becomes excessively sleepy or irritable (unable to settle with toys, TV, food or comfort) - especially despite their temperature coming down.
- Extreme shivering or muscle pain without an obvious explanation.
- Babies of 3 to 6 months of age with a temperature of 39°C / 102.2°F or above.
- Babies and children with a fever of 38°C or above for more than 5 days
- Constantly being sick.
- Constant or worsening tummy pain.
- Blood in the poo or wee.
- Increasingly thirsty and weeing more.
- Any injury of arms or legs causing reduced movement or persistent pain.
- Head injury causing constant crying or drowsiness.
- **Is getting worse or if you are worried.**

Immediately contact your GP or GP Out of Hours (visit <http://www.gpoutofhours.hscni.net/>) and make an appointment for your child to be seen that day.

During the coronavirus pandemic, at peak times, access to a healthcare professional may be delayed. If symptoms continue for 4 hours or more and you have not been able to speak to either a member of staff from your GP practice or to GP Out of Hours, then consider taking them to your nearest A&E.



GREEN

Your child has none of the RED or AMBER signs above, care for them at home but watch for any new signs developing:

- If your child has any symptoms that might be COVID-19 (high temperature, new continuous cough or loss of taste/smell) arrange for them to be tested by calling 119. You, and anyone in your support bubble, must remain at home until your child's test results are back.
- If your child has been burned, visit <https://safetea.org.uk/first-aid/> for first aid advice and for information about when to seek medical attention.

Continue providing your child's care at home.

If you are still concerned about your child, you should contact your local pharmacist or GP.



MENTAL HEALTH

- If you are worried and your child is known to child mental health services, please contact your GP or visit <https://www.familysupportni.gov.uk/>
- If your child needs urgent mental health support or if you notice any self-harm injuries on your child, you may find the following helpful: text SHOUT to 85258, call Samaritans on 116123, call Lifeline on 0808 808 8000, call Parentline NI on 0808 8020 400, or call Childline (under 19s) on 0800 1111. You can also contact your GP or GP Out of Hours, or the nearest A&E department in an emergency.
- If you are worried about an eating problem/disorder, contact BEAT (visit <https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/support-services/>) or your GP.
- Helpful advice is also available on Every Mind Matters (<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters>) and MindEd for Families (<https://www.mindedforfamilies.org.uk/>).