Advice for parents during coronavirus

Whilst coronavirus is infectious to children it is rarely serious. If your child is unwell it is likely to be a non-coronavirus illness, rather than coronavirus itself.

Whilst it is extremely important to follow Government advice to stay at home during this period, it can be confusing to know what to do when your child is unwell or injured. Remember that NHS 111, GPs and hospitals are still providing the same safe care that they have always done. Here is some advice to help:

RED

If your child has any of the following:

- Becomes pale, mottled and feels abnormally cold to the touch
- Has pauses in their breathing (apnoeas), has an irregular breathing pattern or starts grunting
- Severe difficulty in breathing becoming agitated or unresponsive
- Is going blue round the lips
- Has a fit/seizure
- Becomes extremely distressed (crying inconsolably despite distraction), confused, very lethargic (difficult to wake) or unresponsive
- Develops a rash that does not disappear with pressure (the 'Glass test')
- Has testicular pain, especially in teenage boys

You need urgent help:

Go to the nearest A&E department or phone 999

AMBER

If your child has any of the following:

- Is finding it hard to breathe including drawing in of the muscles below their lower ribs, at their neck or between their ribs (recession) or head bobbing
- Seems dehydrated (dry mouth, sunken eyes, no tears, drowsy or passing less urine than usual)
- Is becoming drowsy (excessively sleepy) or irritable (unable to settle them with toys, TV, food or picking up) - especially if they remain drowsy or irritable despite their fever coming down
- Has extreme shivering or complains of muscle pain
- Babies under 3 months of age with a temperature above 38°C / 100.4°F
- Infants 3-6 months of age with a temperature above 39°C / 102.2°F
- For all infants and children with a fever above 38°C for more than 5 days.
- Is getting worse or if you are worried
- Has persistent vomiting and/or persistent severe abdominal pain
- Has blood in their poo or wee
- Any limb injury causing reduced movement, persistent pain or head injury causing persistent crying or drowsiness

You need to contact a doctor or nurse today.

Please ring your GP surgery or call NHS 111 - dial 111

The NHS is working for you. However, we recognise during the current coronavirus crisis at peak times, access to a health care professional may be delayed. If symptoms persist for 4 hours or more and you have not been able to speak to either a GP or 111, then take your child to the nearest A&E

GREEN

If none of the above features are present

- You can continue to provide your child care at home. Information is also available on NHS Choices
- Additional advice is available to families for coping with crying of well babies
- Additional advice is available for children with complex health needs and disabilities.

Self care

Continue providing your child's care at home. If you are still concerned about your child, call NHS 111 - dial 111

Published 2020
The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health is a registered charity in England and Wales (1057744)and in Scotland (SCO38299).

Healthier Together
Improving the health of children and young people

RCPCH
Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health
Leading the way in Children's Health