**What to do if your child has symptoms of coronavirus**

This advice is for babies and children up to the end of primary school, usually the age of 12 or 13.

Teenagers should follow the advice for adults on [when to contact their GP about getting tested for coronavirus.](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/protect-yourself-and-others.html)

Children and babies can get coronavirus (COVID-19). But they seem to get it less often than adults and it's usually less serious.

**When to get urgent medical help**

If your child becomes very unwell quickly, it's rare that they have coronavirus. Their symptoms may be because of another illness.

[Read more about symptoms in babies and children that need urgent medical help.](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/get-urgent-medical-help-if-your-child-is-very-unwell.html)

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

**When to keep your child at home and phone your GP**

Do not send your child to school or childcare if any of the following is true.

Your child has:

* a temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or more
* any other common [symptoms of coronavirus](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/get-urgent-medical-help-if-your-child-is-very-unwell.html) - a new cough, loss or changed sense of taste or smell, or shortness of breath
* been in [close contact](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/close-contact-and-casual-contact.html) with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus
* been living with someone who is unwell and may have coronavirus

You will need to:

* isolate your child - this means keeping them at home and completely avoiding contact with other people, as much as possible. [You can read more on self-isolation here.](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/managing-coronavirus-at-home/self-isolation.html)
* phone your GP - they will advise you if your child needs a [coronavirus test](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/testing/how-to-get-tested.html)
* everyone that your child lives with should also restrict their movements, at least until your child gets a diagnosis from their GP or a coronavirus test result. This means not going to school, childcare or work.
* Treat your child at home for their symptoms.

Your child should only leave your home to have a test or to see your GP.

Follow the advice on what to do if your child:

* is given another diagnosis by your GP
* is not tested and is also not given another diagnosis from your GP
* tests positive for coronavirus
* tests negative for coronavirus

**Children who are close contacts of someone who has coronavirus**

If your child has been in close contact with someone who has coronavirus, you should [restrict their movements](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/managing-coronavirus-at-home/if-you-live-with-someone-who-has-coronavirus.html) for 14 days, even if they feel well.

If your child develops symptoms, isolate your child and phone your GP to arrange a test for coronavirus.

**When it’s okay to send your child to school or childcare**

It's usually okay to send your child to school or childcare if they:

* only have nasal symptoms, such as a runny nose or a sneeze
* do not have a temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or more (as long as their temperature has not been lowered by taking any form of paracetamol or ibuprofen)
* do not have a cough
* have not been in [close contact](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/close-contact-and-casual-contact.html) with anyone who has coronavirus
* do not live with anyone who is unwell and may have coronavirus
* have been told by a GP that their illness is caused by something else, that is not coronavirus. Your GP will tell you when they can return to school or childcare.
* have got a negative ('not detected') coronavirus test result and have not had symptoms for 48 hours

**Runny nose or sneezing**

You do not need to restrict your child's movements if the only symptoms they have are:

* a runny nose
* sneezing

They can continue to go to school or childcare if these are the only symptoms they have.

**If your child also has a high temperature (38 degrees Celsius or over) or has any other**[**common symptoms of coronavirus**](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/get-urgent-medical-help-if-your-child-is-very-unwell.html)**- isolate your child, phone your GP and restrict your movements.**

Most of the time, you do not need to phone your GP if a runny nose or sneezing are your child's only symptoms. Talk to your pharmacist instead.

A runny nose or sneezing on their own are more likely to be symptoms of a cold or other viral infection.