

Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C) associated with COVID-19

What we know about MIS-C

[Multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children \(MIS-C\)](#) is a condition where different body parts can become inflamed, including the heart, lungs, kidneys, brain, skin, eyes, or gastrointestinal organs. We do not yet know what causes MIS-C. However, we know that many children with MIS-C had the virus that causes [COVID-19](#), or had been around someone with COVID-19. MIS-C can be serious, even deadly, but most children who were diagnosed with this condition have gotten better with medical care.

What to do if you think your child is sick with MIS-C

Contact your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic right away if your child is showing symptoms of MIS-C:

- Fever
- Abdominal pain
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Neck pain
- Rash
- Bloodshot eyes
- Feeling extra tired

Be aware that not all children will have all the same symptoms.

Seek emergency care right away if your child is showing any of these emergency warning signs of MIS-C or other concerning signs:

- Trouble breathing
- Pain or pressure in the chest that does not go away
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face
- Severe abdominal pain

How doctors will care for your child

Doctors may do certain tests to look for inflammation or other signs of disease. These tests might include:

- Blood tests
- Chest x-ray
- Heart ultrasound (echocardiogram)
- Abdominal ultrasound

Doctors may provide supportive care for symptoms (medicine and/or fluids to make your child feel better) and may use various medicines to treat inflammation. Most children who become ill with MIS-C will need to be treated in the hospital. Some will need to be treated in the pediatric intensive care unit (ICU).

Parents or caregivers who have concerns about their child's health, including concerns about [COVID-19](#) or MIS-C, should call a pediatrician or other healthcare provider immediately. Healthcare providers can follow [CDC recommendations](#) to keep children and their parents or caregivers safe if an in-person visit is needed.

What we don't know about MIS-C

CDC is still learning about MIS-C and how it affects children, so we don't know why some children have gotten sick with MIS-C and others have not. We also do not know if children with certain health conditions are more likely to get MIS-C. These are among the many questions CDC is working to try to understand.

All CDC recommendations are based on the best data and science available at the time, and we will update them as we learn more.

How to protect your child from COVID-19

Based on what we know now about MIS-C, the best way you can protect your child is by taking everyday actions to [prevent your child and the entire household from getting the virus that causes COVID-19](#).

Take steps to protect children and others

Help stop the spread of COVID-19 by doing the same things everyone should do to stay healthy. Teach your children to do the same.

- Clean hands often using soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid people who are sick (coughing and sneezing).
- Put distance between your children and other people outside of your home. [Keep children at least 6 feet from other people](#).
- Children 2 years and older should wear a [cloth face covering](#) over their nose and mouth when in public settings where it's difficult to practice social distancing. This is an additional public health measure people should take to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in addition to (not instead of) the other everyday preventive actions listed above.
- Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces daily in household common areas (like tables, hard-backed chairs, doorknobs, light switches, remotes, handles, desks, toilets, and sinks).

- Launder items including washable plush toys as needed. Follow the manufacturer's instructions. If possible, launder items using the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely. Dirty laundry from an ill person can be washed with other people's items.

You can find additional information on preventing COVID-19 at [How to Protect Yourself](#) and at [Preventing COVID-19 Spread in Communities](#). Additional information on how COVID-19 is spread is available at [How COVID-19 Spreads](#).

Limit time with other children

If children meet in groups, it can put everyone at risk. Children can pass this virus onto others who may be at higher risk, including [older adults and people who have serious underlying medical conditions](#).

Practice social distancing

The key to slowing the spread of COVID-19 is to limit contact as much as possible. While school is out, children should not have in-person playdates with children from other households. If children are playing outside their own homes, it is essential that they remain 6 feet from anyone who is not in their own household.

To help children maintain social connections while social distancing, help your children have supervised phone calls or video chats with their friends.

Clean hands often

Make sure children practice [everyday preventive behaviors](#), such as washing their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. This is especially important if you have been in a public place.

Change travel plans

Revise travel plans if they included non-essential travel.

Limit time with people at highest risk of severe illness from COVID-19

[Older adults and people who have serious underlying medical conditions](#) are at highest risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

- If others in your home are at particularly [high risk for severe illness from COVID-19](#), consider extra precautions to separate your child from those people.
- If you are unable to stay home with your child while school is out, carefully consider who might be best positioned to provide child care. If someone at higher risk for COVID-19 will be providing care (older adult, such as a grandparent or someone with a chronic medical condition), limit your children's contact with other people.
- Consider postponing visits or trip to see older family members and grandparents. Connect virtually or by writing letters and sending via mail.