



How to discuss coronavirus with your family

Your health is our top priority—and that includes providing you and your family with clear medical insight in times of uncertainty. As COVID-19 concerns grow, we know this can be a difficult topic to talk about with your children. 98point6 Director of Pediatrics Jud Heugel, MD shares what parents should know—and the kid-friendliest way to talk about the facts.

You May Be Wondering

What is coronavirus?

Coronaviruses are a common family of viruses that cause respiratory tract infections ranging from the common cold to more serious illnesses. The most recently discovered type causes an infection called “coronavirus disease 2019” (abbreviated COVID-19).

Are my kids more at risk?

So far, children seem to have milder cases than adults. Symptoms are similar to a common cold or low-grade flu, such as fever, cough, tiredness, sore throat, shortness of breath, body aches, headaches and diarrhea, though they can occasionally be more severe, like pneumonia.



In the case of COVID-19, fortunately there is a ton of reassurance that can be given because in younger children it has mostly caused mild illnesses. At this point, it’s acting like a common cold in kids.

—Jud Heugel, MD

I keep seeing people wearing face masks. Should we be wearing them?

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) does not recommend wearing a face mask to prevent infection; the masks are not designed to *protect against infection*. If you or your child is sick, you can consider wearing a mask to *prevent infecting* others.

Should my kids take a break from after-school sports or activities?

In general, you should continue your normal routines. However, if your child is sick, they should stay home to prevent infecting others. If they are healthy, there are not currently any recommendations against keeping them away from the activities they love.

Will wiping things down (like toys, sports gear and shared surfaces) help?

It can be helpful to clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects, but you don’t need to be overly aggressive about personal items that aren’t touched by others.

Strategies for Parents

Shape the discussion around your children appropriately, especially if they are younger. Remember it's stressful for them to hear words like "quarantine" and "death" and see people with masks. Children look to caregivers for leadership, so it's important to give them a sense that things will be OK and they will be safe.

Pay attention to the types of media they're being exposed to and give them a chance to voice their worries and ask any questions. They may not approach you if they're worried so make sure to proactively check in with them.

Make it a teachable moment. Use the opportunity to teach them about hand hygiene—like washing their hands frequently for 20 seconds and coughing directly into a sleeve. Discussing prevention measures will give them a sense of control and confidence, which is a stress-buster for all of you.



If your child is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, 98point6 is here for you—start a visit with one of our physicians and we can guide you in the right direction.

Text-based care can help you avoid unnecessary exposure while providing you with the trusted guidance (and peace of mind) that you need.

Stay informed

For the most up-to-date information on COVID-19, visit **The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** or **World Health Organization** websites.

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To learn more, visit
www.98point6.com/coronavirus-update



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