Your child is sick. Now what?

Children develop symptoms for many different reasons. Some children have underlying medical issues that present symptoms (i.e. seasonal allergies, asthma, etc.). The overlap between COVID-19 symptoms and other common illnesses like colds and flu means that many people with symptoms of COVID-19 may actually be ill with something else.

If your child develops symptoms at home or is sent home from child care/school due to symptoms, take the following steps.

STEP 1: Seek immediate care for severe illness

If your child is in distress (i.e. significant trouble breathing, chest pain, fainting, or have a significant worsening of any chronic disease symptoms), do not go to a testing centre. Call 9-1-1 or go to the nearest Emergency Department. Be sure to follow up with your primary care provider.

STEP 2: Check if symptoms are possibly due to COVID-19

Common COVID-19 symptoms include:

- Fever (temperature of 37.8°C/100°F or greater)
- New or worsening cough
- Shortness of breath - not related to other known causes (e.g. asthma)
- Difficulty swallowing
- Loss of taste or smell
- Nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain - not related to IBS, anxiety, menstrual cramps

Other symptoms sometimes seen in children can include:

- Unusual tiredness
- Delirium (acutely altered mental status and inattention)
- Sore throat
- Chills
- Runny or stuffy nose – not related to underlying conditions such as seasonal allergies, post nasal drip, etc.
- Unusual Headaches
- Croup

Use the on-line Ontario COVID-19 school screening tool: covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/

You will get a recommendation on what to do next.

If the symptoms are due to common allergies or another underlying condition, consider contacting your health care provider to support the discussion with your child care provider/school.

Learn more about COVID-19 self-assessment.

Lambton Public Health

160 Exmouth Street
Sarnia, ON N7T 7Z6
Telephone: 519-383-8331
Toll free: 1-800-667-1839
www.lambtonpublichealth.ca

STEP 3: Decide if you will get your child tested for COVID-19

If your child has COVID-19 symptoms that are not due to underlying conditions, **visit app.getcorigan.ca to book an appointment**.

For more information on testing locations in Lambton County visit https://lambtonpublichealth.ca/2019-novel-coronavirus/testing-criteria/

If you choose not to get your child tested and they have COVID-19 symptoms, monitor the symptoms, and your child must **self-isolate for 10 days**. Your child can return to child care/school following that time period if they are feeling generally well and have no remaining symptoms.

If your child is not tested, household members who are not fully immunized or have not been positive in the past 90 days, must isolate for 10 days from their last contact with the symptomatic child. This means, if you are unable to isolate the child from the rest of the household, household members need to isolate for a total of 20 days.

STEP 4: Monitor symptoms and self-isolate while waiting for results

While waiting for test results your child must be isolated:

- Stay home – do not leave your home or attend child care/school, social events or any other public gatherings.
- Avoid close contact between the child and others in your household if possible
- If school aged, your child can attend school virtually, if feeling well enough to participate and the option is available.
- Household members, unless fully immunized or have previously been positive within the past 90 days, should monitor for symptoms and must isolate at home until symptomatic person receives a negative result. If the symptomatic person is ALSO a close contact of a positive case, household members MUST isolate.

STEP 5: Check results and complete isolation as directed

covid-19.ontario.ca - visit the provincial website to access results. Test results are typically available in 2-3 days, but may take longer if testing volumes are high. If you are unable to access this website or do not have a health card number please contact the centre you were tested at.

If your child tests positive for COVID-19:

- Lambton Public Health will call you and provide information about the length of isolation required and further direction on returning to child care/school.
- **All household members and close contacts,** unless fully immunized or have previously been positive within the past 90 days, of a person who tests positive for COVID-19 will be contacted by Lambton Public Health and required to stay home and self-isolate for a minimum of 10 days.
- If school aged, your child can attend school virtually, if feeling well enough to participate and the option is available.

If your child is negative for COVID-19:

- They can return to child care/school when they are feeling well for at least 24 hours (no fever, without using medicine and no vomiting or diarrhea for at least 48 hours).

If your child is ill due to another reason diagnosed by a health care provider and does not have COVID-19:

- They can return to child care/school when they are feeling well for at least 24 hours (no fever, without using medicine and no vomiting or diarrhea for at least 48 hours).

Note: Lambton Public Health is not requesting child care operators/schools to require a medical note for a child to return to child care/school.

Additional tips for caring for your child during isolation

- Try to have one person only care for the sick child so others are not exposed.
- If your child can wear a face mask or cloth face covering without finding it hard to breathe, have them wear one when the caregiver is in the room. Don't leave your child alone while they're wearing a mask or cloth face covering. The caregiver also should wear one when in the same room.
- If possible, have your sick child use a different bathroom from others. If that isn't possible, clean the bathroom often, especially after use by the ill child.
- Everyone in your family should wash their hands frequently. Wash with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Use regular household cleaners or wipes to clean things that get touched a lot (doorknobs, light switches, toys, remote controls, phones, etc.). Do this every day.

Resources

Lambton Public Health website:
https://lambtonpublichealth.ca/2019-novel-coronavirus/

Information on:
- How to protect yourself from COVID-19
- Self-isolation
- Families and Caregivers - Child care guidance and FAQs
- Families and Caregivers - Education guidance and FAQs