

# COVID-19

## Frequently Asked Questions

14 May 2020

***This is a changing landscape and this guidance will be updated as appropriate. Please refer to [SA Health Website](#) for the most up to date information.***

### What is COVID-19?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that can cause respiratory infections. This can range from the common cold to more serious diseases such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS). COVID-19 is the name of the disease caused by a new coronavirus that originated in Hubei Province, China.

This is a rapidly evolving situation which is being monitored carefully.

### How is it spread?

COVID-19 is mostly likely spread through:

- > direct close contact with a person while they are infectious (usually face to face contact for at least 15 minutes; or being in the same closed space for at least 2 hours
- > contact with droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze.

COVID-19 may also spread through:

- > touching objects or surfaces (like doorknobs or tables, mobile phones, stair rails, elevator buttons) that have droplets from a cough or sneeze of an infected person, and then touching your mouth, nose, eyes or face.



### For more information

Women's and Children's Hospital  
72 King William Rd, North Adelaide SA 5006  
Telephone (08) 8161 7000



[www.ausgoal.gov.au/creative-commons](http://www.ausgoal.gov.au/creative-commons)

### What are the symptoms?

The symptoms of this new coronavirus (COVID-19) include cough, fever, shortness of breath, or flu-like symptoms. The current evidence is that most cases appear to be mild, but severe cases can occur, particularly in the elderly or immune compromised.

### Should we be wearing face masks to protect ourselves from infection?

Face masks play a very important role in clinical settings, such as hospitals but there is very little evidence of widespread benefit from their use outside of these clinical settings. Face masks must be worn correctly, changed frequently, removed properly and disposed of safely in order to be effective.

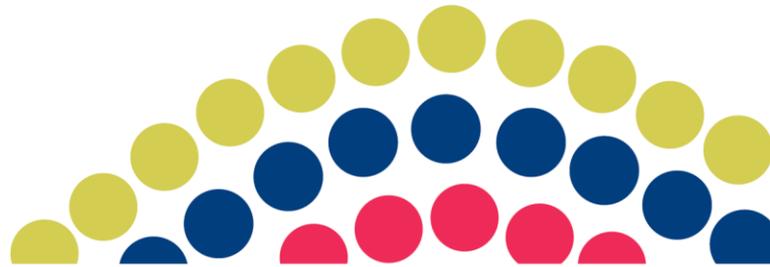
### What should I do if my child develops a fever or any other symptoms?

Should your child develop fever, chills or signs of acute respiratory infection (e.g. cough, sore throat, runny nose, shortness of breath, or loss of taste and smell), they can present for [testing](#) at a COVID-19 clinic.

If your child has an upcoming appointment at the hospital and has respiratory or fever symptoms, please contact your treating clinician or hospital switch on 8161 7000 to reschedule.

Call the 24/7 Coronavirus Health Information Line for further advice on 1800 020 080.

If you are severely unwell, such as having difficulty breathing, call 000 (Triple Zero).



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### What precautions should we take?

Children and young people undergoing treatment and their families will already be familiar with the following infection precautions recommended by SA Health:

- Wash your hands often - with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available. This is particularly important after taking public transport.
- Try to help your child avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands where possible.
- Avoid close contact with people who are known to be unwell.
- Try and cover your child's cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in a bin. Then decontaminate your hands.
- Regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in the home and work environment.

### What if there are other patients with suspected coronavirus in our hospital? Will they pose a risk to my child?

All testing of suspected coronavirus cases is carried out in line with SA Health recommendations. All suspected cases are kept in isolation, away from public areas of the hospital and returned home also in isolation. Any equipment that comes into contact with suspected cases is thoroughly cleaned as appropriate.

Patients and their parents can be reassured that their safety is a top priority and are encouraged to attend all appointments as usual.

### What about visiting my child in hospital?

As is usual practice, any visitors who are unwell or who have any symptoms should not visit your child in hospital.

All visitors should be reminded to wash their hands frequently with soap and water or use hand sanitizer.

We are requesting visitors are kept to a minimum in all areas, **with a limit of one visitor at a time**. When visiting please - where possible - keep visiting time short.

### Should we cancel my child's treatment or follow-up appointments at the hospital?

If your child has a scheduled appointment for treatment, they should attend unless they are unwell.

In the event of any disruption to the service provided, clinicians will always make decisions to prioritise treatment for those most in need and in consultation with patients. The chief focus will be to provide essential services, helping those most at risk to access the right treatment.

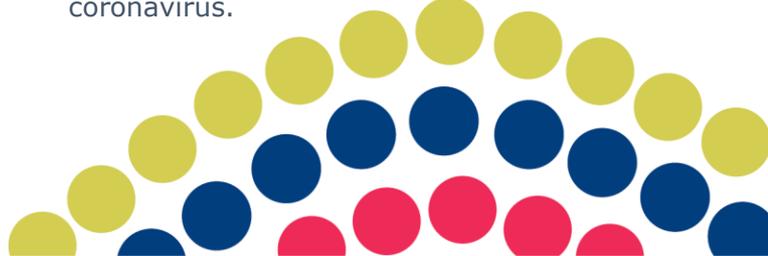
If there is any change to your child's appointment the clinic will contact you.

In some instances less urgent follow up appointments may be offered via telephone or Skype/Telehealth so that patients are not travelling to the hospital unnecessarily.

### Will the supply of my child's medications be affected by COVID-19?

The pharmacy department has been looking at its supply chains to ensure a secure supply of necessary drugs. There is an action plan in place to manage the supply of medicines in Australia.

Whilst this situation may change, currently there are no shortages linked to coronavirus and no drug manufacturers have said they expect problems with supply due to coronavirus.



### **Can my child go to school?**

Current advice is that children can go to school if they are well unless your child's school has specific advice on COVID-19.

For the latest information on schools, visit the [Department for Education](#).

### **Who needs to isolate for 14 days?**

Criteria for self-isolation or quarantine and those eligible for COVID-19 testing is regularly updated on the [SA Health website](#).

All South Australians are encouraged to comply with the latest government guidelines on public gatherings and social distancing.

The latest SA advice can be found [here](#) and National advice [here](#).

### **What if I have more questions?**

Please speak to your child's clinician, go to the [SA Health website](#), or call the 24/7 Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080.

