

# COVID-19

## Frequently Asked Questions

*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. However, based on the available evidence, the current risk to Australia is 'moderate' as Australia does not yet have widespread community transmission.

### How is it spread?

Similar viruses to coronavirus spread by cough droplets or sneeze droplets. These droplets fall on people in the vicinity and can be directly inhaled or picked up on the hands and transferred when someone touches their face.

### 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.



### For more information

Women's and Children's Hospital  
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Telephone (08) 8161 7000



[www.ausgoal.gov.au/](http://www.ausgoal.gov.au/)  
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### Is there a treatment available?

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.

### 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?

If your child develops symptoms within 14 days of last contact with a confirmed case or of returning to Australia, you should initially self-isolate and [seek medical attention](#). Your doctor will tell you if you need to [get tested](#).

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.
- 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 strict regulations in each hospital. 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.

Where possible we request that visitors be kept to a minimum.

### 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. This may change with evolving information.

### Can my child go to the cinema or other public places?

COVID-19 spreads through close sustained contact with someone who has the virus (for instance being within 2 metres of someone for longer than 15 minutes).

If there is sustained transmission of the virus in certain areas, SA Health might advise that people temporarily limit socialising in public places such as entertainment or sports events.

Events of more than 500 people have been cancelled nationally.

### Who needs to isolate for 14 days?

People who:

- have arrived from overseas travel from any country (as of midnight Sunday 15 March 2020)
- have had close contact with a person with COVID-19
- are unwell with symptoms of COVID-19

Healthcare workers who have worn appropriate PPE are not considered close contacts.

Go to the [SA Health website](#) for more information about self-isolation.

### How do I keep myself up to date about COVID-19?

Keep checking the SA Health website for regular updates.

### What if I have some 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.

