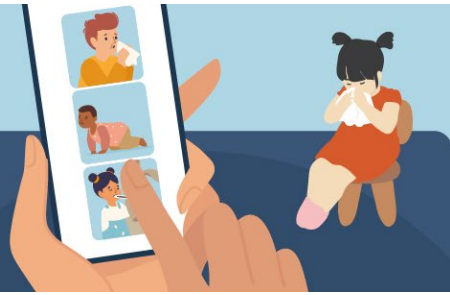


How to take care of my sick child?

- How to treat my kid at home?
- When to seek medical information?
- What symptoms to look for?



Caring for my Sick Child at Home

Being a parent can be stressful!

Even more so when a child is sick.

While minor issues can seem like a big deal, they are usually easy to treat.

Please note that this content is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice or medical care. If you are worried about your health, see a health professional:

- **Dial 811** (24/7) to speak to a nurse.
- Call your **pharmacist** for advice on health concerns and medication.
- Make an appointment at **your medical clinic**.
- **Don't have a doctor?** Dial 811, option 3.
- **Find an appointment:** rvsq.gouv.qc.ca.
- **Screening:** clicsante.ca or 1 877 644-4545.

Infectious Respiratory Illnesses such as the Flu, COVID and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)

Common symptoms of respiratory infections

Gastro

Fever

When to go to and when not to go to the Emergency?

Infectious Respiratory Illnesses such as the Flu, COVID and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)

What are they exactly?

The flu is an infection caused by a virus. Symptoms often include fever, fatigue, chills, cough, muscle or body aches, headache and, on occasion, a sore throat.

COVID is a disease caused by a virus that spreads easily between people. Symptoms usually include fever, cough, fatigue, a loss of taste or smell, headache and trouble breathing.

RSV (respiratory syncytial virus) is a virus that causes lung and airway infections. Symptoms often include cough, runny nose and fever. Sometimes, RSV can lead to trouble breathing, especially in babies and older adults.

What to do at home

- Wash your hands and your child's hands often.
- Avoid sharing personal items (glasses, dishes, toothbrushes, etc.).
- Clean and disinfect the child's personal space regularly.
- Encourage the child to rest: have them take naps.
- Have them drink cold or warm fluids.
- Follow the pharmacist's advice. If the child is over the age of 3 months, give them acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil) if there are no contraindications.
- For a sore throat: If the child is over the age of 4, give them ice cubes or non-medicated lozenges. They can also gargle with salt water ($\frac{1}{2}$ tsp of salt in 250 ml of warm water). Give them cold, soft foods such as yogurt, cottage cheese, ice cream, etc.
- For nasal congestion (a stuffy nose) or a runny nose: Use a saline solution to thin out the mucus. Need help? Check out [*L'hygiène nasale*](#) on the CHU Sainte-Justine website to learn about the various nasal hygiene techniques.
- If the child is coughing a lot at night, elevate their head (put extra pillows under their head, for example).

When to seek medical advice

Call 811, option 1, to speak with a nurse, or contact a health professional (pharmacist, doctor, nurse practitioner) if:

Child aged 3 to 6 months not vaccinated within the last 48 hours (2 days)

- Fever of 38.0 °C (100.4 °F)
- Rectal temperature of 36.0 °C (96.8 °F) or lower

Child younger than 2 years

- Fever of 38.5 °C (101.3 °F) or higher for more than 48 hours
- They are showing signs of mild to moderate [dehydration](#).
- Their temperature is increasing quickly.
- The fever comes back after being gone for more than 24 hours.
- They are having more trouble breathing than usual.
- Their symptoms are worsening or not improving after 7 days.

Children of all ages

- They are drinking and urinating less than usual.

[When to go to the hospital](#)

Your baby is younger than 3 months and has:

- A rectal temperature of 38.0 °C (100.4 °F) AND has not been vaccinated within the last 48 hours.

Your child has one of the following symptoms, regardless of their age:

- A rectal temperature of 36 °C (96.8 °F) or lower.
- Pale or unusual skin colour.
- Breathing faster or working harder to breathe despite frequent nasal hygiene with saline water.
- Retractions: when the child is breathing, the area between or below the ribs sinks in. Another sign that they are having trouble breathing is flaring of the nostrils.
- Difficulty eating.
- Signs of moderate to severe [dehydration](#).

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- Worsening of overall health: no response to stimulation, lethargic and less alert.
 - Your child lives with a chronic illness or has a weakened or deficient immune system AND a temperature of 38.5 °C (101.3 °F) or higher.
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Children of all ages

- Drinking and urinating less than usual.

Need help?

- Call Info-Santé 811, option 1 to speak with a nurse 24/7.
- Speak to a pharmacist for advice on medication or treatments.
- Make an appointment at your medical clinic.
- If you do not have a doctor, go to the [Primary Care Access Point](#) or dial 811, option 3.

Common symptoms of respiratory infections

COVID-19	Flu (influenza)	Cold	Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)
Fever	Sudden appearance of fever with chills	Mild or no fever	Fever
Dry cough	Cough	Cough or sneezing	Cough
Fatigue	Extreme fatigue	.	.
.	.	Runny nose	Runny nose
Loss of smell or taste	.	.	.
.	Headache	.	.
.	Muscle and joint pain	.	.
.	.	Sore throat	.
.	.	.	Trouble breathing
.	.	.	Decreased appetite

Gastro

What is it exactly?

Gastroenteritis, also known as gastro or stomach flu, is an inflammation of the stomach and intestines. It often causes diarrhea, vomiting, stomach cramps and sometimes fever. It is very contagious. You can avoid spreading it and catching it by following simple hygiene practices such as washing your hands.

What to do at home

- Stay hydrated: [Hydrating and rehydrating when you have gastroenteritis.](#)
- Eat the right foods: [Foods to eat when you have gastroenteritis.](#)

When to seek medical advice

Call 811, option 1, to speak with a nurse, or contact a health professional (pharmacist, doctor, nurse practitioner) if:

Child younger than 2 years

- Regardless of symptoms

Child over the age of 2 with one of the following symptoms:

- Tummy ache that does not go away or worsens
- Fever lasting more than 48 hours
- Rash
- Still vomiting 4 to 6 hours after following the rehydration tips.
- Refuses to drink.
- Frequent and heavy diarrhea that has been going on for more than seven days.
- Signs of moderate [dehydration](#).
- Overall health is worrisome or deteriorating.

When to go to the hospital

- The child has refused to drink for the last 4 to 6 hours.
- Moderate to severe signs of [dehydration](#) that are worsening or not improving despite following the rehydration tips.
- The child is showing signs of confusion, is dizzy or has a headache.

- Blood in the vomit or stool.
- Black stool.
- Greenish coloured vomit (fluorescent green).
- Your child lives with a chronic illness or has a weakened or deficient immune system AND a temperature of 38.5 °C (101.3 °F) or higher.

Need help?

- Call Info-Santé 811, option 1 to speak with a nurse, 24/7.
- Speak to a pharmacist for advice on medication or treatments.
- Make an appointment at your medical clinic.
- If you do not have a doctor, go to the [Primary Care Access Point](#) or dial [811](#), option 3.

Fever

What to do at home

- Have the child drink small amounts often.
- Give them time to rest, to nap or to take a break.
- Dress them in light clothing.
- To help bring down the fever, the following medications can be given to your child, if needed:
 - **Option 1:** Acetaminophen (example: Tylenol, Tempra)* – For children over the age of 3 months only.
 - **Option 2:** Ibuprofen (example: Advil, Motrin)* – For children over the age of 6 months only.

***Caution:** The dose is based on your child's weight. Please read the package label carefully. To find out what to do if your child has a fever, check out the Government of Québec's page on [Fever in children](#).

When to go to and when not to go to the Emergency?

When to go to the Emergency

Video (in French only): <https://youtu.be/5ju1XvB58f0>

When not to go to the Emergency

Video (in French only): <https://youtu.be/cgkJV8w8tal>

Thank you to the CIUSSS de l'Est-de-l'Île-de-Montréal, in collaboration with the CHU Sainte-Justine, the Montreal Children's Hospital, the CHUM, the CIUSSS de l'Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal and the Direction régionale de santé publique de Montréal for having let us use some of their content and visuals. To learn more, [click here](#).