

COVID-19 Advisory

Disease in the Pediatric Population



Understanding COVID-19 in Children

Full understanding of the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19 has been and continues to be challenging. We are identifying new characteristics of the virus, new symptoms associated with the disease, challenges with testing and treatment, and progression and recovery from the disease process.

The pediatric population includes those under the age of 18. Most studies to date on COVID-19 in the pediatric population come from either China or Europe, primarily Italy, although there are some preliminary results in the United States.

Early Findings of COVID-19 in Children

1

Children are less likely to contract COVID-19 than are adults. The pediatric age group made up only 1.7% of all cases of COVID-19 in the United States.

2

90% of children contract COVID-19 due to close contact with someone who has the disease. Only 12% of children with close contact have been found positive for the virus.

3

A high percentage of children with COVID-19 have no symptoms. At least 15% of those positive are totally asymptomatic.

4

Symptoms in children are usually mild. Pneumonias are common positive children, but they were usually mild or asymptomatic.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION

Children with underlying health problems are at increased risk of severe disease. Rare, severe outcomes have been reported in children, including deaths, but in most cases, the child had an underlying medical condition. The most common underlying conditions were chronic lung disease (including asthma), cardiovascular disease, and immunosuppression.

Additional Considerations for Parents

As the country transitions from stay-at home to a less restrictive social posture, parents should consider not only their children's health, but their own as well. With increased social contacts outside the home, there is an inherent increased risk that a child might become infected with SARS-CoV-2. Additional precautions should be taken for neonates (less than 6-12 months of age), since their immune systems are less robust. If a parent, or other close relative, has any underlying risk factors, this should be considered when deciding the degree of social isolation to maintain.