What Does the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Mean for Families?

A new viral illness called coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) was discovered in China in December 2019.

Lessons learned from China and similar viral diseases can help families prepare for spread in the US. How children in the US will be affected is still mostly unknown. So far, proportionately fewer children have gotten sick in China, and the effects on them have mostly been mild. It is important for families to prepare for spread in the US.

Who Is at Risk?
COVID-19 appears to be spread via respiratory secretions when infected people cough or sneeze, similar to how influenza (flu) spreads. Currently, people at risk for COVID-19 include those who have been in close contact with infected people within 14 days before their symptoms began. The average time from when persons are exposed to signs of illness is about 5 days and can range from 2 to 14 days. People with COVID-19 have fever, cough, muscle aches, headache, and diarrhea, which are all symptoms similar to other viral infections, such as the flu. People who need hospitalization usually have severe pneumonia.

Currently, there are no treatments or vaccines available.

What Should Families Do to Prepare?

If your child gets sick, keep them home away from people who are sick. If your child gets sick, keep them home and call ahead to your physician to ask about next steps. Do not go to an emergency department unless you are having an emergency. If someone in your family becomes sick with COVID-19, follow guidance from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to decrease the chance of spreading.

Precautions for Children With Special Health Care Needs

Children with special health care needs, especially those with immune or neuromuscular problems, or with chronic illnesses, such as asthma, diabetes, or cancer, might be more likely to have complications from COVID-19. They might need to avoid crowds or large gatherings more than other children.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/chest-lungs/Pages/2019-Novel-Coronavirus.aspx

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a viral respiratory illness that can cause symptoms of fever, cough, muscle aches, headache, and diarrhea. Some patients with COVID-19 develop pneumonia and may need to be hospitalized.

Some actions to prevent transmission of COVID-19 include

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Wash hands frequently for at least 20 seconds
- Cough or sneeze into your arm or elbow
- Sanitize surfaces regularly
- Avoid persons who are sick
- Stay home if you have a fever or respiratory symptoms

If your child has a fever or respiratory symptoms, contact your child’s physician before going to the clinic or hospital.

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