

# How to talk to your children about COVID-19

Coronavirus disease 2019 - "COVID-19," is an infection caused by a specific virus SARS-CoV-2\*

\*SARS-CoV-2 = Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome - Corona Virus

## How is it spread?

- Coughing  
Blowing nose
- Talking
- Kissing and  
during sex
- Touching an infected  
surface

You can get infected even from asymptomatic patients, who don't even know about the disease yet.

Spread radius up to **2 metres**

Incubation period is 2 - 14 days. The risk of getting infected is the same for all people. Children and young people, however, often experience only mild symptoms of the disease.

## What are the symptoms?

- Fever
- Cough
- Breathing problems\*
- Fatigue
- Muscle fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Loss of smell, taste
- The symptoms are similar to flu

## How is it diagnosed?

The doctor may take some samples, including saliva, nasal swab and throat swab, to send for testing.

## How is it treated?

There is no specific antiviral medicine yet. The treatment is mostly symptomatic, depending on individual needs of each patient.

If the symptoms are mild, the patient can stay home and treat the symptoms there. If the symptoms are severe, the patient needs to be put in hospital (in case of breathing problems, for example).

Duration of the disease with mild symptoms  
**2 weeks**

Duration of the disease with severe symptoms  
**6 weeks**

## How to talk to your children?



**Be proactive**, don't wait for them to come. Explain the situation accordingly to their age and nature. Try to reduce their anxiety, not to increase it.



Make sure you have **enough time** for a proper explanation.



**Talk to them** on a daily basis, but don't overwhelm them. Watch the news after your children go to sleep.



**Reassure them** it's okay to admit if they don't feel well. Explain that the symptoms are mostly mild for children and young people. And all of the symptoms are curable.



**Ask** what they already know, **answer** their questions and **correct** their misinformation. Use trustworthy information only ([the Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic](#), [World Health Organization](#), [Loono](#)).



**Explain** that not everyone coughing or sneezing is coronavirus positive. [Video](#).



**Don't be afraid** to admit you don't know all the answers for their questions - even professionals are unsure about something. Reassure them there are experts working on a cure.



**Plan their day** - time for school, games, phone, household chores. It will help them to have some kind of regime in these days.



**Keep calm.** Children are aware of your emotions and they rely on safety of the environment you created. Don't share your worries with them extensively.



**Maintain contact** with your family via video calls, for example. It's important for your children to know their grandma, grandpa or friends are safe.



**Listen** to their feelings, don't take them lightly.



**Explain** the ways to prevent infection. Teach them to cover their mouth while sneezing or coughing with their sleeve. Teach them how to wash their hands properly. You can use this video to make it fun. [video](#).



**Remind** them to wear a face mask and explain why is it important not to touch it. Highlight the importance of enough exercise, sleep and vitamins.

Test your knowledge:

