

Cook Children's Prepares for COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

Fort Worth, Texas (March 10, 2020) – As cases of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) continue to emerge, Cook Children's Health Care System is closely monitoring the outbreak and taking all necessary precautions. The good news is, based on confirmed cases of COVID-19 from around the world, children have been relatively protected from serious illness. [According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), children are less likely to get COVID-19 than adults. And more positive news is, if they do get it, it's usually a mild case.

That being said, infectious disease experts at Cook Children's expect to see COVID-19 cases in children in the coming weeks and months.

Here's what parents need to know:

- Children who test positive for COVID-19 will likely experience fever, cough and not feel well.
- Adults who are infected with COVID-19 are more likely to be very ill and could even require hospitalization.
- There are no treatments available for COVID-19.
- Regardless of what's causing the cough and fever, it is important that sick children stay home and avoid spreading illness to others.
- If a parent suspects their child has COVID-19, they should first call Tarrant County's Coronavirus Hotline at 817-248-6299.

If a patient presents to Cook Children's Emergency Department with a suspected COVID-19 infection, they will be asked a series of screening questions. If the answers are concerning for COVID-19 exposure, the child and caregivers will immediately be isolated in a negative-pressure room, which allows air to flow in, but not out. This ensures airborne viruses are confined to the patient's room. Emergency room staff will activate the established infection prevention protocol to protect staff and other patients and families from exposure. All COVID-19 testing will be directed to the Tarrant County Public Health (TCPH) department. Cook Children's cannot order COVID-19 testing without TCPH approval.

Cook Children's materials management team is closely monitoring supply chain, especially as it relates to personal protective equipment (PPE) such as masks, gloves and gowns. Early conservation measures have been successful in our efforts to preserve the supply of PPE. At this point, we are not taking any extraordinary measures outside of continued conservation.

As COVID-19 infections increase among adults in North Texas, Cook Children's is taking steps to ensure we have a healthy workforce to care for the children who need our services. Employees have been instructed to notify their supervisor and Cook Children's Occupational Health

Department if they are planning any travel to or returning from high risk areas for COVID-19 outbreaks. In addition, as we emphasize year round, employees are instructed to stay home if they have a fever or flu-like symptoms. We are highly focused on ensuring our employees remain healthy so they can continue to provide care to our patients.

In addition, Cook Children's is continuing to take normal precautions to limit the spread of infectious disease through routine environmental cleaning at the medical center and all additional locations. We are also evaluating our visitation policies, but have not implemented any changes at this point.

We are working closely with the TCPH regarding the evolving COVID-19 situation. We encourage anyone with questions or concerns about COVID-19 to call the local Coronavirus Hotline at 817-248-6299. If a positive case of COVID-19 is confirmed in Tarrant County, TCPH will provide communication to the public and the media.

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About Cook Children's

Cook Children's Health Care System embraces an inspiring Promise – to improve the health of every child in our region through the prevention and treatment of illness, disease and injury. Based in Fort Worth, Texas, we're proud of our long and rich tradition of serving our community.

Our not-for-profit organization encompasses nine companies – a medical center, two surgery centers, a physician network, home health services and a health plan. It also includes Child Study Center at Cook Children's, Cook Children's Health Services Inc., and Cook Children's Health Foundation. With more than 60 primary, specialty and urgent care locations throughout Texas, families can access our top-ranked specialty programs and network of services to meet their unique needs.

We've worked to improve the health of children from across our primary service area of Denton, Hood, Johnson, Parker, Tarrant and Wise counties for more than 100 years. Based on the exceptional care we provide, patients travel to Cook Children's from around the country and the globe to receive life-saving pediatric care built on leading technology, extraordinary collaboration and the art of caring.

For more information, visit cookchildrens.org.

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