**Testing for children**

Children and COVID-19

* **-**[**If your child has symptoms of COVID-19**](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/children-and-covid-19/if-your-child-has-symptoms-of-covid-19.html)
* **-**[**If your child is a close contact of COVID-19**](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/children-and-covid-19/if-your-child-is-a-close-contact.html)
* **-**[**If your child is told to isolate from other people**](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/children-and-covid-19/if-your-child-is-told-to-isolate-from-other-people.html)
* **-**[**Testing for children**](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/children-and-covid-19/testing-for-children.html)

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You will be told by a GP or our [contact tracing team](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/testing/contact-tracing.html) if your child needs a test for COVID-19 (coronavirus). The test is free and the GP consultation is free.

Your child will usually need a test if they have:

* been in close contact with someone who has the virus
* common symptoms of COVID-19
* been in contact with someone who has symptoms

Your child's test details and results will be sent to you by text message.

**Make sure the GP or contact tracer has the correct mobile number for you. Delays happen when we do not have your correct mobile phone number.**

Your child will usually get their result within 3 days of their test. But it can take longer. If you are waiting more than 3 days for your child's result, phone HSELive on [1850 241 1850](tel:18502411850).

[Read advice on what to do if your child has symptoms of COVID-19](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/children-and-covid-19/if-your-child-has-symptoms-of-covid-19.html)

[Read advice on what to do if your child's school tells you they are a close contact](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/child-close-contact-covid-19-school.html)

**While your child waits for their test and results**

If your child has symptoms, they should [isolate from other people](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/children-and-covid-19/if-your-child-is-told-to-isolate-from-other-people.html). When they get their test result, they'll be told what to do next.

If your child has no symptoms but is a close contact, they will need to [restrict their movements](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/managing-coronavirus-at-home/if-you-live-with-someone-who-has-coronavirus.html).

You and everyone else in your household will need to [restrict your movements](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/managing-coronavirus-at-home/if-you-live-with-someone-who-has-coronavirus.html). You'll need to do this at least until your child gets their result.

Isolating from other people and restricting your movements are two different things. In both instances, your child should not go to school. Everyone they live with should stay at home.

[Read more about the difference between isolating and restricting your movements](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/managing-coronavirus-at-home/self-isolating-and-restricting-movements-differences.html)

**Bringing your child to a test centre**

You may need to drive your child to a test centre. It may be a strange experience for your child. They will see people in protective clothing and may find this frightening. Explain to them what will happen before they go.

[Read about what to expect at a test centre](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/testing/what-happens-during-the-test.html)

These visual guides may also help children who need to be tested:

[Getting ready to go to the Test Centre (Comic) (PDF, 5.35 MB, 3 pages)](https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/news/newsfeatures/covid19-updates/partner-resources/getting-ready-to-go-to-the-test-centre-comic-.pdf)

[Getting ready to go to the Test Drive-in Centre (Comic) (PDF, 4.30 MB, 3 pages)](https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/news/newsfeatures/covid19-updates/partner-resources/getting-ready-to-go-to-the-test-drive-in-centre-comic-.pdf)

[Autism Social Story for Testing (PDF, 837 KB, 4 pages)](https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/news/newsfeatures/covid19-updates/partner-resources/autism-social-story-for-testing.pdf)

**Nasal swabbing for children**

[Read about what you and your child will need to do when you arrive at the test centre](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/testing/what-happens-during-the-test.html#test-centre)

The test that children have is simpler than the test adults have. It's easier and quicker for your child.

Children do not have their throats swabbed. Their test sample is taken using a nasal swab. A swab is a type of cotton bud. It's put between 1cm and 2cm inside each of your child's nostrils for a second or two.

**Test results for children**

You'll get your child's test result by text message usually within 3 days of their test.

It will be one of the following:

* [Positive](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/testing/test-results.html#detected)
* [Negative](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/testing/test-results.html#not-detected)
* [Indeterminate, invalid or inhibitory result](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/testing/test-results.html#indeterminate)

[Read more about test results and what you and your child will need to do next](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/testing/test-results.html)