



Wonders & Worries

Professional support for children
through a parent's illness.

We will, together.

Supporting Children During a Parent's Hospitalization with Covid-19

ACUTE CARE

Explaining COVID-19

COVID-19 is a virus, or group of germs, that can make people sick. It is very contagious, meaning it can quickly spread from one person to another person. COVID-19 is part of the coronavirus family, which also includes the common cold and flu. We have medicine to help protect us from catching the flu, but COVID-19 is new. Doctors do not have medicine yet to help protect people from catching it, but scientists are working very hard to create a new medicine.

Not many kids get sick from COVID-19; more adults get sick from this group of germs. We do not always know where someone catches COVID-19 because it is invisible. The germs could be hiding anywhere, especially places where lots of people go, like the grocery store or playgrounds. Germs also hide on surfaces people touch regularly, like doorknobs.

Common Symptoms

People with COVID-19 may feel extra tired and have a cough and fever. Lots of rest, drinking plenty of water, and medicine for the fever will help them feel better. Sometimes this is not enough. If someone feels very sick and water, sleep, and medicine do not help, they go to the hospital for extra care. Doctors and nurses are

experts at making people feel better. This is the best place to be if someone feels very sick.

What Happens at the Hospital?

Your parent is in the hospital right now because they don't feel well enough to be at home. Doctors and nurses regularly check on your parent every day and at night too. They also give your parent stronger medicine, only found in the hospital. Your parent is in the safest place possible, and the medical staff is doing everything they can to help your parent feel better.

Coping with Limited or No Visitation Policies

Because COVID-19 spreads so easily, hospitals are limiting visitors, or maybe not allowing any visitors at all. This is hard for family and friends and may feel upsetting. Hospitals all over the world must follow this rule too; and many other people, who can't visit their friends or family, feel the same way as you. The hospitals must follow this rule to protect you, me, your parent, and everyone else inside and outside the hospital. This is the only way to stop spreading the germs and keep everyone safe from catching COVID-19. Rules like staying home and not visiting the hospital will not last forever, but it is important for everyone to follow them right now.

WHAT YOU CAN DO WHEN A PARENT IS HOSPITALIZED:

- Maintain open communication with your child. New questions or concerns may come up over time. Let your child know you're always available to talk.
- Acknowledge and validate your child's feelings.
- Emphasize the hospital is the best place their parent could be to get better.
- Share family videos and pictures over the phone.
- Take pictures of the hospital room to show the child.
- Set up time to talk virtually: phone calls, FaceTime, Marco Polo, Zoom, etc.
- Play a game over video chat, such as I Spy—this allows the child to acclimate to the room, while also giving parents a sense of what medical equipment the child focuses on.
- Include medical staff in video chats. Show staff smiling/waving, saying or doing something silly, sharing positive updates on parent's progress, giving medicine, or bringing food.
- Encourage your child to make artwork or cards for the hospitalized parent. These can be shared by sending pictures/video over the phone or reading cards through video chat or phone calls.
- Provide daily updates of the hospitalized parent, and include something positive (friendly nurse, feeling better, watched a funny show, slept well, etc.)
- Explain the importance of, and model, social distancing, washing hands, and staying home.

