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Information about the coronavirus and Covid-19 for children

Did you know that you might have had Covid-19 without knowing it? Do you know how the vaccines work? Or that some pets can catch Covid? We have collected questions and answers here from the authorities about how children and young people are affected by the coronavirus and Covid-19.

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Foto: Johnér/Lieselotte Van Der Meijs

- cough

- fever

- sore throat

- breathing difficulties (please note: in this case you need to call 1177, or ask an adult to make the call for you)

- muscle or joint pain

- runny nose or blocked nose

- headache

- nausea

- loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

- loose stomach/diarrhoea

The symptoms usually appear about 3-5 days after you were infected. It can sometimes take up to 14 days.

You can also have had Covid-19 without knowing if it, without having had any symptoms at all or without noticing them. It is more common for children to have had it without noticing it than adults.

Do children get infected and become ill with the coronavirus?

Children can be infected with the coronavirus and get the disease known as Covid-19. But they will often only have a slight cold and need to rest. The disease is most dangerous for those over the age of 65, and for those who are particularly susceptible to falling ill, because they have other diseases.

Some children may also feel ill for a long time, long after they have had Covid-19.

Few children become seriously ill. Some, however, may suffer from MIS-C, which is a rare and severe form of hyperinflammation.

Can children infect other children and adults?

Children are not contagious as adults are. But the older you are, the more cantogious you are. Those aged 16-17 are about as contagious as adults.

When will the virus disappear?

No one knows when or if the coronavirus will disappear. But it won't affect us and society like this forever. The whole world is working hard to stop the infection. Vaccinations will help to reduce the coronavirus in society, but cannot completely remove it.

Pets

Can pets catch the coronavirus and Covid-19?

The coronavirus is transmitted mostly between people. It has happened that cats, dogs and ferrets, for example, became infected when they were close to people who had Covid-19, but it is unusual. Pets don't get very sick if they get infected, but they can have a mild cold.

As far as we know today, no people have been infected by sick pets. Scientists continue to keep track of this, but they believe that there is very little, almost no, risk of being infected from a pet.

Testing

Do I need to get tested if I feel ill?

It depends on how old you are and in what way you are ill.

Students in preschool, primary school or upper secondary school who are not vaccinated should get tested if they feel sick and have any of the Covid-19 symptoms. You may also need to get tested if someone you live with, a close friend or a classmate has Covid-19, even if you feel healthy.

Covid-19 can cause one or more of these symptoms:

- cough

- fever

- sore throat

- breathing difficulties (please note: in this case you need to call 1177, or ask an adult to make the call for you)

- muscle or joint pain

- runny nose or blocked nose

- headache

- nausea

- loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

- loose stomach/diarrhoea

The symptoms usually appear about 3-5 days after you were infected. It can sometimes take up to 14 days.

Young children, at preschool age, often have a cold without it being Covid-19. But as it can be unpleasant for small children to get tested, the healthcare system usually says that they should only stay at home instead, with no need to be tested.

If you are a school child, it is a good idea to tell an adult if you have symptoms. You will be asked to submit a sample. If the test result is negative, which means that you do not have Covid-19, you can go to school as usual, play with friends, participate in activities and other things that are fun.

If it turns out that you have Covid-19, you need to contact your healthcare provider and tell him or her about it. If the providers know who is ill, they can stop the infection more quickly.

How do I book a test?

If you are over 13 years old and have an eID, you can book a test yourself.

If you are under 13 years old, or if you do not have an e-ID, ask your parent or another adult to help you book a test. The test is free of charge.

Call 1177, or see https://www.1177.se/om-covid-19-prov to find out how it works. It is important that you select the right region at the top of 1177.se before you read more about what to do. It works differently depending on where you live.

How do you get tested?

If you are younger than 13, you need to ask your guardian for help in arranging a test.

If you are 13 or older and have an e-ID, you can book a test yourself.

If you are over 16, you can book the test and take it yourself. This is called self-testing. Exactly how this happens depends on where you live. Check out https://www.1177.se/om-covid-19-prov to find out how it works. It is important that you select the right region at the top of 1177.se before you read more about what to do.

The test is usually carried out using a special swab (like a long Q-tip). Together with the test, there is an information sheet explaining what to do. You (or whoever helps you) will insert the swab into your nose, mouth and throat. This is so that cells from your mucous membranes will stick to the swab. The sample is then sent to a laboratory, where staff look for coronavirus in the cells.

On 1177.se you can see a slideshow about how to take the sample. But it is not the same from place to place in the country, so check what applies in your particular region.

Some people find it uncomfortable to take the test, but it does not usually hurt.

You will get an answer after one or a few days. If the test shows that you have Covid-19, you will receive information from your healthcare provider about what you need to do. If seven days have passed since you became ill and your fever has been gone for at least two days, you can usually go back to school, if you feel fine otherwise.

When can I meet others if I have Covid-19?

You can meet with others when seven days have passed since you became ill, you have not had a

fever in the last two days and you feel fit!

Vaccinations

Is it possible to get a Covid-19 vaccination?

Yes, there is a vaccine against Covid-19. Researchers have developed several different types of vaccines. All vaccines have been tested on many people and it seems that all the vaccines work well and are safe.

Vaccination against Covid-19 in Sweden is voluntary and free of charge. Everyone aged 12 years and older may get vaccinated. Each region is responsible for carrying out Covid-19 vaccinations.

Which vaccines are approved for children and adolescents?

The Public Health Agency recommends the use of one vaccine called *Comirnaty*. This is a so-called mRNA vaccine. It is a new type of vaccine that works as follows.

- When you receive the mRNA vaccine, some of your cells will read the mRNA molecules' instructions, and start making spike proteins. Then your immune system will start to defend your body against the spike protein by sending out antibodies and T-cells (white blood cells) to attack it.

- If you later become infected with the coronavirus, your immune system will recognise the virus's spike protein and be ready to defend your body against it.

- The mRNA molecules in the vaccine do not remain in the body, but are broken down shortly after vaccination.

- There are also other substances in the vaccine, including a fat drop that helps the vaccine to transport the information to the cells.

Researchers are constantly investigating how good and safe different vaccines are for children of different ages.

Several different authorities, such as the Public Health Agency, the Swedish Medical Products Agency, and the European EMA, are constantly monitoring which side effects children and adults can get from all Covid-19 vaccines. If any vaccine appears to be dangerous, the authorities can stop vaccination until everything is safe again.

Can I decide for myself whether or not to get vaccinated?

Please note that this complete answer only applies to those who will become 16 years old this year or are already 16 or 17!

The authorities recommend that you be vaccinated against Covid-19, partly because there is a risk

that even a young person will become seriously ill or experience long-term problems after having Covid-19.

Since you are not yet of legal age, you may need to bring a consent form or make a maturity assessment in order to get your vaccination. It works differently in the various regions. Here you can read more about how vaccinations are carried out in your region. Make sure to select the right region at the top of the page.

If you want to get vaccinated, but your parents say no

If your region requires approval from your legal guardian and you are unable to receive it, your healthcare professional may instead make a maturity assessment of you. During the maturity assessment, you will talk for a while. Among other things, it will be verified that you understand the information provided and that you understand what the vaccination involves. Some regions only perform a maturity assessment. In this case, you do not need the approval of your legal guardian.

If your parents want you to get vaccinated, but you say no

Vaccination against Covid-19 is voluntary, no one can be forced to be vaccinated. Even minor young people are entitled to decide for themselves whether they want to be vaccinated.

How do I book a vaccination appointment?

When you can get vaccinated, and how it works, depends on the region you live in. Go to 1177.se and read about what applies where you live. Don't forget to select the right region first.

Covid certificates and travel

What is Covid Certificate? Is it the same as a vaccination certificate? When is a Covid certificate needed?

The Covid Certificate is a certificate that you can get on paper or digitally if you are travelling in Europe. It only applies to travel and nothing else (at least right now).

There are three different types of Covid-19 certificates:

- a certificate that you have been vaccinated ("vaccination certificate")

- a certificate that you have tested yourself and are not infected ("test certificate")

- a certificate that you have had Covid but are recovering ("recovery certificate" -- you can only get this right now if you are over 16 years of age).

How do I order a Covid Certificate?

You can order your Covid Certificate from covidbevis.se.

If you are under the age of 16, you need to ask your legal guardian to order a Covid certificate for you at covidbevis.se.

For children about the coronavirus

För barn: Så funkar coronaviruset

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