



Fact Sheet: Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C)

On May 14, 2020, the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) distributed a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Health Advisory Network Alert and issued RIDOH clinical guidelines advising Rhode Island healthcare providers to report suspected cases of Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C). Rhode Island's first case of MIS-C was confirmed on June 25, 2020.

What is multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children?

[Multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children \(MIS-C\)](#) is a condition where different body parts can become inflamed, including the heart, lungs, kidneys, brain, skin, eyes, or gastrointestinal organs. We do not yet know what causes MIS-C. However, we know that many children with MIS-C had the virus that causes [COVID-19](#), or had been around someone with COVID-19. MIS-C can be serious, even deadly, but most children who were diagnosed with this condition have gotten better with medical care.

Where have there been other cases of MIS-C in the US?

The majority of cases in the US to date have been on the East Coast, with more than 150 cases in New York state and more than 30 cases in Washington, DC. Isolated cases have also been reported in other states, including California, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Washington state. At least four of those cases have been fatal.

What are the symptoms of MIS-C?

Fever (Most children have fever (temperature of 100.4 degrees F or 38.0 degrees C or greater) lasting several days, along with other symptoms, including:

- Abdominal pain
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Neck pain
- Rash
- Bloodshot eyes
- Feeling extra tired

Be aware that not all children will have all the same symptoms.

What should parents do if their child has these symptoms?

Contact your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic right away if your child is showing the symptoms above. Seek emergency care right away if your child is showing any of these emergency warning signs of MIS-C or other concerning signs:

- Trouble breathing
- Constant pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face
- Severe abdominal pain

Is MIS-C contagious?

MIS-C is not contagious, but it is possible that a child has COVID-19 or another infection that may be contagious. This is why hospitals will take infection control measures when treating children.

How do doctors care for children with MIS-C?

Doctors may do certain tests to look for inflammation or other signs of disease. These tests might include:

- Blood tests
- Chest x-ray
- Heart ultrasound (echocardiogram)
- Abdominal ultrasound

Doctors may provide supportive care for symptoms (medicine and/or fluids to make your child feel better) and may use various medicines to treat inflammation. Most children who become ill with MIS-C will need to be treated in the hospital. Some will need to be treated in the pediatric intensive care unit (ICU).

Parents or caregivers who have concerns about their child's health, including concerns about [COVID-19](#) or MIS-C, should call a pediatrician or other healthcare provider immediately. Healthcare providers can follow [CDC recommendations](#) to keep children and their parents or caregivers safe if an in-person visit is needed.

How can parents help prevent their child from getting MIS-C?

Parents should take steps to prevent their child from being exposed to COVID-19. Face coverings, hand hygiene and physical distancing are the best ways to prevent COVID-19. Children with underlying medical conditions can be at higher risk for poor outcomes of COVID-19, making prevention measures even more important.

What we don't know about MIS-C

CDC is still learning about MIS-C and how it affects children, so we don't know why some children have gotten sick with MIS-C and others have not. We also do not know if children with certain health conditions are more likely to get MIS-C. These are among the many questions CDC is working to try to understand. All CDC recommendations are based on the best data and science available at the time, and CDC will update them as they learn more.

Where can parents and others learn more about MIS-C and COVID-19?

CDC has additional information on MIS-C and COVID-19 for parents and health professionals at <https://www.cdc.gov/mis-c/>. Information for parents is also available in [Spanish](#) and other languages on CDC's web page: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/children/mis-c.html>. For [general COVID-19](#) information, visit health.ri.gov/covid, call 401-222-8022, or email RIDOH.COVID19Questions@health.ri.gov.