

Fact Sheet: Pediatric Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome

What is pediatric multisystem inflammatory syndrome?

Pediatric multi-system inflammatory syndrome (PMIS) is a new health condition appearing in children in New York City (NYC) and elsewhere. Some doctors think the condition is related to having coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), but the connection is still not clear.

PMIS is like other serious inflammatory conditions such as [Kawasaki disease](#) and toxic shock syndrome. Children with PMIS can have problems with their heart and other organs and need to stay in a hospital to receive support in an intensive care unit.

PMIS is a rare condition. However, because it is life-threatening, it is important that parents know the signs and symptoms, so they can get help right away.

What are the signs or symptoms of PMIS?

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

Common symptoms include:

- Irritability or sluggishness
- Abdominal pain without another explanation
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Rash
- Conjunctivitis, or red or pink eyes
- Enlarged lymph node (“gland”) on one side of the neck
- Red, cracked lips or red tongue that looks like a strawberry
- Swollen hands and feet, which might also be red

When should I call my child’s doctor or get emergency care?

You should call your doctor immediately if your child becomes ill and has had continued fever. Your doctor will ask about any signs or symptoms your child has and use that information to recommend next steps. If your child is severely ill, you should go to the nearest emergency room or call **911** immediately.

Is PMIS contagious?

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

Is there a treatment for PMIS?

Currently, children with PMIS are being treated with different therapies, including intravenous immunoglobulin and steroids. These drugs help reduce the body’s immune response that causes the inflammatory syndrome. Children are also being given other medications to protect their heart, kidneys and other organs.

How can I prevent my child from getting PMIS?

Although we do not know yet if PMIS is related to COVID-19, you should still take steps to prevent your child from being exposed to COVID-19. Face coverings, hand hygiene, and physical distancing are the best way to prevent COVID-19. Children with underlying medical conditions can be at higher risk for poor outcomes of COVID-19, so you should make sure they follow COVID-19 prevention measures.