

Interim FAQs for Communities: COVID-19 and Pediatric CPR



American
Heart
Association.

American Academy
of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

CPR & Emergency Cardiovascular Care

Q: Can I get COVID-19 from performing CPR?

A: According to the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](https://www.cdc.gov), the situation is rapidly evolving, and your risk is variable depending on your location. Children tend to exhibit a milder form of the illness than adults.

For pediatric patients, CPR with breaths is recommended for people who have been trained in CPR, but as an alternative, Hands-Only CPR can be performed until help arrives if you are unsure about putting your mouth on a stranger's mouth, or have concerns the person may have COVID-19.

Q: Should I still do the breaths for CPR?

A: Please review the following recommendations:

- For a child or an infant, the cause of the heart stopping is likely to be due to a respiratory issue. So, giving compressions with breaths is the most effective CPR in helping to save lives, especially in children/infants, and people whose hearts have stopped due to drug overdose, drowning, and other respiratory issues.
- Most children or infants who have their heart stop are provided CPR by a family member or friend. Consider performing breaths and compressions, especially if the child/infant is known to you.
- If a child's heart stops, and you are concerned they may have had respiratory symptoms, it is at your discretion to perform or not perform breaths based on your personal preference. It is still important to phone 9-1-1 (or your local emergency number) and, if you are in a public place, find an AED. If you choose to perform breaths, you can also use a barrier device, such as a pocket mask or face shield, to help protect yourself.
- If you do not feel comfortable giving breaths, or are concerned about COVID-19, you can consider only performing Hands-Only CPR until help arrives.
- Hands-Only CPR has been shown to be as effective as conventional CPR in many cases, and is much better than no CPR. If you choose to perform Hands-Only CPR, first phone 9-1-1 (or your local emergency number), and then push hard and fast in the center of the person's chest until advanced help arrives.
- If you think the person may have COVID-19, please state your concerns to the emergency response telecommunicator so everyone who responds can be aware of the potential for COVID-19 transmission.

Q: Can I still use an AED?

A: **Yes.** Early AED use is still very important. AED pads can be placed on the person's chest as directed by the AED prompts. Use the AED as directed. There are no additional directions needed for coronavirus. Clean the AED surface after use with simple disinfectant to kill the virus, following the manufacturer guidelines. Protect yourself and others by wearing gloves when cleaning then washing your hands with soap and water, or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Avoid touching your face (e.g., eyes, mouth, or nose).