

Pediatrician: Three signs your sick child may need to see a health care professional

December 14 2023, by DeeDee Stiepan, Mayo Clinic News Network



Credit: Pixabay/CC0 Public Domain

While most common colds, flu, or other illnesses can be treated at home, Dr. Angela Mattke, a pediatrician with Mayo Clinic's Children's Center, says parents should watch for these three signs that their sick child may need to see a health care professional.

Hydration

When [children](#) are sick, they're not going to drink fluids as much. But Dr. Mattke says, if they can drink enough to urinate at least every eight hours, they should be meeting bare minimum for hydration.

"Typically, if they've urinated less than three times in 24 hours, that's concerning for dehydration," she says.

If you're concerned your [child](#) is dehydrated, that would be a time to call your health care team to see about bringing them in.

Breathing

Another thing Dr. Mattke says to check is how your sick child is breathing.

"If your child is seeming to be breathing faster, harder or seeming to have some kind of impairment in any way, that's a really good time to call your [health care](#) team or possibly bring them in," she says. "If your child is struggling to breathe, where they can't talk in sentences, that's something more urgent and possibly should be seen in an urgent care or emergency room setting."

How are they acting?

"You can have a child who has a [fever](#) and is acting fine, running around, eating, drinking, breathing fine. But you can have a child who maybe has a really low-grade fever, but is not as alert, they're not responding to you as well—that is a sign that you should bring them in," says Dr. Mattke.

Dr. Mattke says if your sick child is hydrated, breathing fine and acting

normal, but you still have questions, never hesitate to call or message your care team.

"There's a whole group of people that can help answer questions, from nurses to providers," says Dr. Mattke. "We want to hear from you."

2023 Mayo Clinic News Network. Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

Citation: Pediatrician: Three signs your sick child may need to see a health care professional (2023, December 14) retrieved 28 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2023-12-pediatrician-sick-child-health-professional.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.