

# RESPIRATORY INFECTIOUS DISEASES

(such as the flu or COVID-19)

## Decision tool

### To protect your health and that of other people

Respiratory infectious diseases spread very easily.

They circulate year round, but mainly from late fall to early spring.

The symptoms and their severity can vary depending on a person's age and health.

#### The main symptoms are as follows:

- fever (for children, see [Quebec.ca/GrippeRhumeGastro](http://Quebec.ca/GrippeRhumeGastro));
- cough (new or worsened);
- sore throat;
- stuffy nose.

#### Protective and hygiene measures can also help prevent the spread of respiratory infectious diseases:

- do frequent hand hygiene;
- clean and disinfect your immediate environment, such as furniture surfaces, countertops, door handles and light switches;
- cough and sneeze into the bend of your elbow;
- do not hesitate to wear a well-fitting mask in public places if you are vulnerable to respiratory infections (older adults, pregnant women, people who are immunocompromised or have a chronic disease).

When a vaccine is recommended against an infection or disease, get vaccinated. It's the best way to protect yourself and other people.

[Quebec.ca/CampagneVaccination](http://Quebec.ca/CampagneVaccination)

[Quebec.ca/GrippeRhumeGastro](http://Quebec.ca/GrippeRhumeGastro)

**IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS OF A RESPIRATORY INFECTION,** consult this table to help you make the best decision for yourself and your loved ones.

**I don't have a fever, but I do have the following symptoms:**

- stuffy nose;
- cough (new or worsened);
- sore throat.

#### DECISION

I wear a mask.  
I keep a distance from other people.  
I avoid contact with vulnerable people and non-essential social events.  
I choose to do remote activities, when possible.  
I do a COVID-19 rapid test.  
I consult a healthcare provider like a pharmacist, if necessary.

**I have a fever and the following symptoms:**

- cough (new or worsened);
- sore throat;
- stuffy nose;
- muscle or joint pain;
- extreme fatigue;
- headache

#### DECISION

In addition to the above recommendations, I **stay home**.  
Most people with an infection recover without special treatment.  
Consult [Quebec.ca/GrippeRhumeGastro](http://Quebec.ca/GrippeRhumeGastro).  
If you are worried, call Info Santé 811, option 1.

**I have symptoms of respiratory infectious disease and I am at risk of complications** (babies under 6 months of age, people aged 60 and over, pregnant women, people who are immunocompromised or have a chronic disease).

#### DECISION

I call **Info Santé 811, option 1**. A nurse will assess my condition and make recommendations based on my health condition.  
When I am around other people, I wear a mask as much as possible.  
I make an appointment quickly to get tested:  
[Quebec.ca/PointServiceLocal](http://Quebec.ca/PointServiceLocal).

**I have symptoms of respiratory infectious disease and I am in one of the following situations:**

- persistent or increasing pain when I breathe;
- worsening or persistent fever (fever that is lasting 5 days or more);
- symptoms that are getting worse or that have not improved after 7 days

#### DECISION

I **consult my doctor** as soon as possible.  
If I don't have one, I visit [Quebec.ca/GuichetAccès](http://Quebec.ca/GuichetAccès).  
When I am around other people, I wear a mask.  
If in doubt, I contact **Info Santé 811, option 1**.

**I am in one of the following situations:**

- persistent or increasing difficulty breathing;
- blue lips;
- severe chest pain;
- persistent or worsening severe headache;
- drowsiness, difficulty staying awake;
- confusion, disorientation;
- seizures (the body stiffens and the muscles contract, causing involuntary jerky movements);
- no urine for 12 hours, intense thirst;
- fever in a child who seems very ill, lacks energy and refuses to play;
- fever in a baby who is less than 3 months old.

#### DECISION

I **go immediately to the emergency room**.  
If I need immediate assistance or help, I call 911.

The information in this document does not replace the opinion of a healthcare professional. If you have any questions about your health, call **Info Santé 811** or consult a healthcare professional.

# GASTROENTERITIS

## DECISION tool

To protect your health and that of other people

Gastroenteritis can be caused by a virus, a bacterium or a parasite.

Norovirus is the most frequent cause of gastroenteritis in adults while rotavirus is more common in children.

The main symptoms of gastroenteritis are as follows:

- Diarrhea : at least three watery stool or loose stool, within a 24-hour period or an increase in the frequency or quantity of bowel movements;
- stomach pains and cramps;
- nausea;
- vomiting;
- mild fever (in some cases);
- muscle aches;
- loss of appetite;
- change in overall condition (weakness, drowsiness, irritability, confusion).

The symptoms of gastroenteritis usually last 24 to 72 hours.

An affected person is usually contagious when they have symptoms and especially when symptoms are at their worst.

A person can remain contagious for a few weeks after the symptoms have disappeared.

Protective and hygiene measures can help prevent the spread of infection:

- do frequent hand hygiene.
- clean and disinfect toilet seats and any surfaces or objects that may be contaminated by stool or vomit;
- get young children vaccinated against rotavirus. It's the best way to protect them.

[Québec.ca/GrippeRhumeGastro](https://quebec.ca/GrippeRhumeGastro)

## IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS OF GASTROENTERITIS,

consult this table to make the best decision for yourself and your loved ones. If you suspect a traveller's diarrhea, contact Info Santé 811.

I have diarrhea without any other symptoms and my overall condition is good

### DECISION

I probably have a temporary upset stomach. A balanced diet should alleviate the symptoms. If necessary, I call Info Santé 811, option 1.

I have at least three diarrhea (watery stool or loose stool), within a 24-hour period or an increase in the frequency or quantity of bowel movements:

- stomach pains and cramps;
- nausea;
- vomiting;
- loss of appetite;
- mild fever;
- headache;
- muscle aches.

### DECISION

I probably have gastroenteritis that is caused by a virus. It will last 24 to 72 hours. I stay at home until the symptoms disappear. I self care at home. I consult Québec.ca. If necessary, I call Info Santé 811, option 1.

I have symptoms of gastroenteritis and I am at risk of complications (children under 2 years of age, people aged 65 and over, pregnant women, people who have a chronic disease).

### DECISION

I call Info Santé 811, option 1. A nurse will assess my condition and will make recommendations based on my health condition.

- I have had diarrhea for over 48 hours without any improvement and I have followed the instructions for rehydrating and eating.
- I have had diarrhea and a fever for over 48 hours.
- I have been vomiting for over 48 hours without any improvement and I have followed the instructions for rehydrating and eating.
- I have had diarrhea for over a week.

### DECISION

I consult my doctor as soon as possible. If I don't have one, I visit Québec.ca/GuichetAccès. If in doubt, I contact Info Santé 811, option 1.

- I have a lot of blood in my stool or black stool.
- I have diarrhea with severe abdominal pain.
- I have diarrhea, I am very thirsty and I have not urinated for over 12 hours.
- I have frequent episodes of vomiting that are not decreasing after 4 to 6 hours.
- There is stool or blood (red or looks like coffee grounds) in my vomit.
- My overall condition is getting worse (weakness, drowsiness, irritability, confusion).

### DECISION

I go immediately to the emergency room. If I need immediate assistance or help, I call 911.

The information in this document does not replace the opinion of a healthcare professional. If you have any questions about your health, call Info Santé 811, option 1 or consult a healthcare professional.