

PUBLIC HEALTH ALERT

COVID-19 and Skin Changes in Children

Skin changes have been reported in approximately 20% of patients with COVID-19¹ and unusual presentations, including acrocyanosis, pernio-like changes, and acral ischemia, have recently been associated with SARS-CoV-2 infection.²⁻⁴ These may present as acrally distributed red-purple papules/nodules akin to pernio or cutaneous vasculitis. Children may be otherwise asymptomatic or may present with mild symptoms consistent with COVID-19.



These skin lesions should prompt clinicians to test for COVID-19 infection (SARS-CoV-2). This testing is necessary to ensure appropriate contact tracing and to initiate 14-day isolation periods for patients and family members, if indicated. In addition, a referral to a paediatric dermatologist for a complete assessment and further work-up should be considered.

Providers should continue to report all microbiologically confirmed cases of COVID-19 in a hospitalized child, or in a non-hospitalized child with serious co-morbid conditions, to the Canadian Paediatric Surveillance Program (CPSP).

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Figure 1. Photograph courtesy of the Hospital for Sick Children

References

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