

## Study: 33% of children hospitalized with COVID-19 admitted to ICU

August 7, 2020

Melissa Jenco, News Content Editor

Article type: [News](#)

Topics: [COVID-19](#), [Hospital Medicine](#), [Infectious Diseases](#), [Pulmonology](#), [Respiratory Tract](#)

---

**Editor's note:** For the latest news on COVID-19, visit

<https://www.aapublications.org/news/2020/01/28/coronavirus>.

One-third of children hospitalized with COVID-19 were admitted to the intensive care unit (ICU), a rate similar to adults, according to a new study.

However, the likelihood of landing in the hospital in the first place is significantly lower for children.

Members of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) COVID-19-Associated Hospitalization Surveillance Network analyzed data on 576 children under age 18 years from 14 states who were hospitalized for COVID-19 between March 1 and July 25, 2020.

The hospitalization rate for children was eight per 100,000 compared to 164.5 per 100,000 for adults, according to a new *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*. The weekly rate of pediatric hospitalizations rose throughout the study period.

Overall, the rate was highest for children under age 2 years at 25 per 100,000 children, compared to four per 100,000 for ages 2-4 years and six per 100,000 for ages 5-17 years.

Medical chart reviews for 208 patients showed the median hospital stay was 2.5 days. About 33% were admitted to the ICU and 6% required invasive mechanical ventilation compared to 32% and 19%, respectively for adults. One child with multiple underlying conditions died.

About 42% of the hospitalized children had an underlying condition, most commonly obesity, chronic lung disease or prematurity, according to the study. The rate of hospitalization for Hispanic children was eight times higher than White children, and the rate for Black children was five times higher than White children. Hispanic and Black children also had a higher prevalence of underlying conditions.

Authors noted these conditions likely put them at higher risk. They also said Hispanic parents may be more likely to have jobs that don't allow for social distancing, increasing the likelihood of bringing the virus home.

Among a subset of 83 children, 11% were diagnosed with **multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children**, a rare but serious condition linked to COVID-19.

Authors of the study encouraged children to be diligent about washing their hands, social distancing and wearing a face covering if they are over 2 years of age.

"Reinforcement of prevention efforts is essential in congregate settings that serve children, including childcare centers and schools," they wrote.

### Resources

- [Information from the CDC about COVID-19 for health care professionals](#)
- [Information about COVID-19 from the AAP Red Book](#)
- [Information about COVID-19 from the AAP](#)
- [Information for parents from HealthyChildren.org on coronavirus](#)

