

Hamilton Health Sciences Foundation Pocket Health Guide

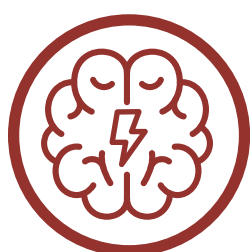


Hamilton
Health Sciences
Foundation

Pocket Health Guide

Hamilton Health Sciences (HHS) is ready whenever you need them. In the meantime, keep this health guide in your smart phone or near by so you're ready when health-related questions arise.

This expert-backed Pocket Health Guide helps take the guesswork out of those "should I be worried?" moments. You'll find short information on symptoms, treatments and what to do immediately for each of the following:



Strokes



Heart Attacks



Blood Pressure



**Pediatric
Symptoms**



**Severe Illness
in Children**



**Fever in
Children**



Lyme Disease



Checking Moles

PLEASE NOTE: The information in this Pocket Health Guide is intended for general educational purposes and is not a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Please contact your family physician for specific guidance if you are experiencing symptoms for any of the health concerns in this guide.



Strokes

What are they?

Strokes happen when there's a problem with the blood supply to your brain, causing brain cells to be damaged or die. There are two types:

1. **Ischemic** — when a blood clot blocks an artery, stopping blood flow to the brain.
2. **Hemorrhagic** — the bursting of a blood vessel in the brain, causing bleeding.

What signs should I look for?

F – FACE – Is it drooping?

A – ARMS – Can you raise them?

S – SPEECH – Is it slurred or jumbled?

T – TIME – Time to call 9-1-1 right away

When to seek medical attention?

If you see these signs, call 9-1-1. The sooner it's treated, the better the chances of recovery!

Remember: even if symptoms are temporary, a blockage may have occurred. These “transient ischemic attacks” indicate a stroke may occur. You should be referred to a stroke prevention clinic for assessment.



Did you know?

- **Hamilton General Hospital** is home of Ontario's largest integrated **stroke program**.
- HHS is one of Canada's **largest academic teaching hospitals**.



Heart Attacks

What are they?

Heart attacks occur when blood is unable to flow through your heart due to an artery blood clot.

What signs should I look for?

If these symptoms are significant and last for more than a few minutes, get help immediately:

- Chest discomfort: pressure, squeezing, fullness, pain, burning, heaviness
- Discomfort: neck, jaw, shoulder, arms, back
- Tingling or numbness
- Nausea and vomiting
- Dizziness
- Sweating
- Shortness of breath
- Feeling of the heart pounding
- Indigestion
- Feeling faint or anxious

When to seek medical attention?

If you believe a heart attack is occurring:

1. Call 9-1-1.
2. Stop all activity and sit or lay down.
3. If you have nitroglycerin, take your prescribed dose.
4. Chew and swallow one 325mg or two 81mg of Aspirin.
5. Stay calm and wait for help.



Did you know?

- **Hamilton General Hospital** perform more **heart surgeries** than any other hospital in Ontario.
- HHS is one of only two **burn centres** in all of Ontario.



Blood Pressure

What is it?

The force of the blood against your artery walls as your heart pumps is called blood pressure. If it's high (*hypertension*), it's too strong; if it's low (*hypotension*), it's too weak. Both can lead to health problems.

What signs should I look for?

Most people with blood pressure issues have no major symptoms, so it's important to know your blood pressure numbers: 130/80 mmHG is considered normal.

Hypertension symptoms: dizziness, headaches, vision problems, shortness of breath.

Hypotension symptoms: dizziness, nausea, fainting, lack of concentration, unusual thirst.

How to diagnose blood pressure issues?

Your doctor will measure your blood pressure, and may also recommend a home blood pressure monitor.

How to treat blood pressure issues?

You may be prescribed medication, plus:

- Reduce salt in your diet
- Increase physical activity
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Limit alcohol
- Quit smoking



Did you know?

Hamilton General Hospital developed **award-winning technology** to allow medical professionals worldwide to view live, interactive surgeries.



Pediatric Symptoms

Do children need medical care for a cold or the flu?

Most viral illnesses have no specific treatment and can be managed at home. So, when a child is sick try to keep them as comfortable as possible. Ensure they're drinking enough liquids. A fever can be treated with medications such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen.

At what point is medical attention needed?

A child should be taken to the emergency department:

- if they're having difficulty breathing
- if they're not getting enough fluids (if the parents notice that they're not peeing frequently)

If a child has a fever for more than five days, they should be taken to their family doctor.



Did you know?

McMaster Children's Hospital is leading the way in **advanced pediatric research** in the areas of surgical care, mental health and autism.



Severe Illness in Children

If your child is experiencing any of these symptoms or have existing health concerns that are not improving with the prescribed treatment, seek medical attention immediately:

Breathing

- Breathing is noisy when resting
- Having difficulties speaking because it's hard to breathe
- Out of breath
- Cannot drink
- Long pauses or gasps between breaths

Behaviour

- Not reacting to loud noises being touched, being talked to, food, or drink
- No eye contact
- Not noticing moving objects, staring blankly
- Unable to stay awake
- Unusual movements, becoming clumsy
- Seizures, spasms or slurred speech



Did you know?

McMaster Children's Hospital is the second largest provider of **in-patient pediatric services** in Ontario.



Severe Illness in Children

Skin

- Blue lips or tongue
- Purple blotches, or many small purple dots
- Gray, very pale skin that's cold and blotchy
- Cold, clammy hands or feet
- Yellow skin and eyes, along with not feeding

Fluids

- Eight or more hours without peeing, wet diapers, nursing, or drinking
- Vomiting every hour for more than four hours
- Red, very dark black, green or brown vomit
- Belly is larger than normal
- Frequent blood in stools



Did you know?

- **McMaster Children's Hospital** is a **regional hub** for children's care across south-central Ontario—with more than 458,000 patient visits each year!
- They have a **hospital-based midwifery care unit**, one of the first of its kind in Canada.



Fever in Children

What is it?

Fever is your child's body's way of fighting an infection. Normal body temperature is 37°C (98.6°F), but during a fever is over 38° C (100.4° F). Some fevers last 2 to 3 days even with medication.

What can I do to help my child?

- Plenty of fluids
- Help your child get comfortable
- Medication to lower the fever

When should I call the doctor?

Call your doctor if you notice ANY of the following:

- Less than 3 months old:
 - over 37.5°C (99.5°F), taken under armpit
 - over 38°C (100.4°F), taken in the bottom
- Over 3 months old: over 40°C (104°F)
- Fever lasts for more than 3 days.
- No wet diaper or passed urine in 12 hours.

Unable to reach your family doctor? Take your child to the emergency department.

If your child turns blue or stops breathing, call 911.



Did you know?

McMaster Children's Hospital is the home to the **only pediatric emergency department** in the region—and it's expanding.



Lyme Disease

What is it?

Lyme disease is a bacterial infection from the bite of blacklegged ticks. A tick needs to be latched onto your skin for 24-36 hours to transmit Lyme disease. Otherwise, it will feel like a regular bug bite—with no risk for Lyme disease.

What are the symptoms & treatment?

Symptoms take up to 4 weeks to present, most commonly a rash expanding outward like a bull's eye. Other symptoms: unexplained headache, fever, joint swelling, and muscle pain.

Lyme disease is treated with antibiotics.

How to check for ticks?

Check for ticks in less visible areas of the body like in the armpits and behind the ears. If you find a tick that has not latched onto the skin, there aren't health risks.

If it has latched on:

- Remove the tick with tweezers
- Pull it straight out
- Wash the skin with soap and water



Did you know?

Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre is home to one of only a few **CyberKnife systems** in Canada, offering non-invasive radiation therapy.



Checking Moles

Why do it?

Checking your body for moles that exhibit warning signs of skin cancer is important. Skin cancers found early tend to be highly treatable.

What should I look for?

A - Asymmetry - Moles that aren't round or oval and have uneven shapes.

B - Border - Look for jagged or irregular borders.

C - Colour - Check for colours like red, white, or dark brown

D - Diameter - Identify moles larger than 6mm across

E - Evolution – Note if they change quickly in size, colour, or shape, or become raised, itchy, or bleed

When should I do it?

Perform checks regularly. Have moles that exhibit these red flags checked out by a doctor.



Did you know?

- **Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre** is the sole facility in south-central Ontario (one of only three in Canada) **equipped to treat ALL types of cancers.**
- Nearly **630,000 patient visits annually** annually
- Leading recruiter of patients to clinical trials — the first to benefit from new treatments and interventions.