

# Advice regarding COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and Childhood Heart Disease

## Department of Paediatric Cardiology

### COVID-19 in children

There is limited data on COVID-19 in children. No data on children or adults with congenital heart disease is available at this time.

Overall, infection is less common and the disease is less severe in children than in adults. Severe cases of COVID-19 in children have been associated with underlying conditions.

Children who are immunocompromised, and those with underlying heart or lung disease, may be at increased risk. Known risk factors in adults such as obesity, diabetes, and hypertension, may also be risk factors in children.

### Infection and severity

Having Childhood Heart Disease (CHD) should not increase the chance of becoming infected, but CHD may be a condition that can increase the severity of COVID-19 — particularly in severe CHD associated with congestive heart failure, chronic lung disease, chronic cyanosis, or pulmonary hypertension.

### Attending school

The great majority of children with CHD are able to attend school safely. If your child has a more severe form of CHD, or has had

recent cardiac surgery, you should discuss this with their treating team.

To reduce the risk of infection, it is important that good hygiene practices continue, such as washing your hands regularly and covering your coughs and sneezes with a tissue.

Your child should remain at home if they have any respiratory symptoms or fever.

### Flu vaccination

Consideration should also be given to obtaining the seasonal Influenza vaccine. People over 6 months of age with cyanotic CHD, congestive heart failure, and coronary artery disease are eligible for free vaccination.

### Ongoing care

It is important that your child's usual medical care continues, including medications. Whilst many outpatient consultations have transitioned to telehealth, face-to-face consultations and cardiac investigations are performed as needed.

If you are concerned about your child's health you should seek medical attention, either through your GP, Paediatric Cardiology service, or attend the Emergency Department if very unwell.



### For more information

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