

COVID-19: What to Know?

as of March 25, 2020

As a parent or caregiver, you may have concerns. These are important things to know about your child's healthcare.



My child has heart disease. Are they at higher risk of getting very sick?

While children are just as likely as adults to get COVID-19, they are much less likely to get severely sick. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) say adults with serious medical conditions, like heart disease, are at a higher risk of getting very sick from COVID-19, but we don't know if children with heart disease are at increased risk yet. In an important study of over 2000 pediatric patients that tested positive for COVID-19 in China, only one child died. Most cases were mild, with less severe cases in children (5.9%) compared to adults (18.5%).

While other viruses have caused greater sickness in children whose immune system is low, we don't yet know whether COVID-19 will be more severe for children with heart transplants. Please take all precautions until we understand more.



What should I do to keep my family safe?

As the caregiver of a child with heart disease, your family should already be careful about protecting yourselves from germs and infections. Continue those healthy habits and take extra precautions.

Encourage your family to be health heroes!



- Continue to take all regular medicines. Keep at least four weeks of medicine available, as pharmacies may get crowded.



- Get immunosuppression and anticoagulation levels drawn when instructed by your care team.



- Wash your hands for 20 seconds, sing "Happy Birthday!"
- Don't touch your face or rub your eyes.
- **STAY AT HOME** to help slow the spread of the virus. If you leave home, use *social distancing*. When you return home, change your clothes, and wash your hands.



- Encourage children to be more careful than normal while playing, to prevent injuries and doctor/hospital visits.

FLATTENING THE CURVE



What is it about?

If too many people get sick with COVID-19 too quickly, our hospitals won't have enough medical staff, equipment, or beds to care for them or others with different medical issues.

What should I do?

STAY AT HOME to reduce the number of people who get sick at the same time. We can't stop the spread of the virus, but we can slow it down to give our hospitals enough capacity to care for those who are sick.

SOCIAL DISTANCING



What is it about?

A very important way to slow down the spread of COVID-19 and "flatten the curve."

What should I do?

STAY AT HOME. If you must leave your home, keep at least 6 feet between yourself and others.



Why was my clinic appointment canceled?

We must work together to slow down the spread of COVID-19. Many clinic visits and elective procedures have been canceled or postponed to protect your family, our community, and the healthcare system. Your appointments may change or happen virtually through telehealth or telephone. Your care team is committed to making sure your child still gets the best care.

If you have a specially approved clinic visit, you may see different people than you're used to and the clinic may look emptier. ***If you or your child are sick, you MUST call before coming in.***



What is telehealth?

Just like video chats or calls with family or friends, you can now meet with your doctor online or over the phone. Talking with your doctor or care team on the phone or computer is called "telehealth." It's a great way to stay connected and keep your scheduled appointments without the risk of spreading sickness.



When should I call my care team?

Call your care team anytime you have questions or things you want to talk about—just like you always would. This is a time of uncertainty, but we are always here for you.

If you or your child experience a cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, diarrhea, or fever, ***call your care team BEFORE going into the Emergency Department.***

Is anything different in the hospital right now?

If you need to visit the hospital during this outbreak, here are some things you may encounter:



- Entering the hospital, you may be screened for illness.



- The Emergency Department (ED) may be crowded. ***Call your care team BEFORE going to the ED.*** You may be directed to a different part of the hospital than normal.



- Your care team may be wearing different masks and gowns.



- Visitor policies may be different.
- Food offerings may be limited. Cafeterias may be closed.

COPING IN A PANDEMIC

It is okay to feel a variety of emotions when change is happening. Have patience and understanding for the health of everyone involved. Here are great ways you can support your family during this time:

- 1 Validate or give "names" to feelings, but don't dwell.
- 2 Develop and follow healthy daily schedules.
- 3 Find positive, distracting activities for your family when negative feelings take over.
- 4 Limit news/media exposure. As a family, talk about one good thing that happened each day.
- 5 Encourage relaxation strategies, like deep breathing, mindfulness exercises, and yoga.
- 6 Challenge negative thoughts! Ask: Is this true? Is it helpful? Is there a more helpful thought I can focus on?
- 7 Model healthy coping and take time to address your own feelings as well.

Change is happening rapidly.

Visit the CDC website for the most up-to-date information.
www.cdc.gov