

Coronavirus (COVID-19) – information for children, young people and families from the Kidney team

We understand that you might be worried about coronavirus – also known as COVID-19 – particularly if your child has a long-term health condition, such as chronic kidney disease, or they have had a kidney transplant. This information sheet from the Kidney team at Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH) sets out our advice for children, young people, parents and carers who use our services.

Please read this alongside our general FAQs for families at gosh.nhs.uk/covid-19-FAQ. You can also find the latest news, information and resources in our COVID-19 information hub at gosh.nhs.uk/coronavirus-hub.

This information comes from the Government, the Renal Association and the clinical team at GOSH.

Does COVID-19 affect children?

The evidence to date shows that although children can get infected with COVID-19 very few children will develop severe symptoms, even if they have an underlying health condition.

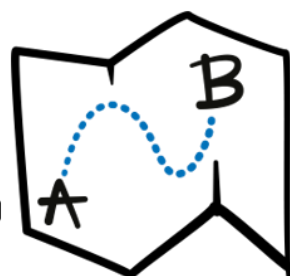
What is the advice for children with chronic kidney disease and those who have had a kidney transplant?

At the start of the pandemic, it was thought that all kidney patients may be at higher risk because of COVID-19. This was a sensible and safe approach based on the evidence at the time. You may have been advised by the NHS and your clinical team at GOSH to 'shield' your child.

The British Association for Paediatric Nephrology (BAPN), the Renal Association and the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) have since updated their guidance for children and young people with kidney conditions.

Most children and young people with kidney disease and those who have had a kidney transplant are no longer considered to be 'extremely clinically vulnerable'. There is only a small group of kidney patients that should continue shielding.

Whether or not your child needs to shield depends on where they are on their transplant journey and the dosage of immunosuppressive medication they are receiving. The Kidney team may also advise these patients to take further precautions while shielding, such as not leaving your home.



Find more information about which kidney patients require shielding from the BAPN at renal.org/updated-bapn-covid-19-shielding-guideline.

If you're unsure whether your child should be shielding or have questions or concerns about staying shielded, please contact your clinical team.

We appreciate being asked to shield your child might cause anxiety. You can find special guidance from GOSH on what shielding means for child and family at gosh.nhs.uk/covid-19-and-vulnerable-children. You can find further guidance on shielding at nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/whos-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus.

We know that practising shielding can be difficult, and at times, impossible for families visiting the hospital for haemodialysis. We suggest you and your child shield (or self-isolate the best you can) any time you're not at GOSH or travelling to the hospital for your appointment.

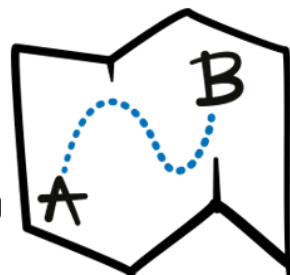
If your child is not included in these shielding lists, your child should now be able to leave the house with family, so long as they follow the government's widely published advice to prevent the spread of infection, including strict social distancing and keeping good hand hygiene.

Specific advice about attending haemodialysis sessions

To ensure that we can continue to provide dialysis for your child during this difficult time, the Haemodialysis unit will only be open on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday until further notice. Patients will be allocated either a morning or afternoon time slot.

To allow us to protect your children, family and our staff, we ask that you follow the guidance below:

- Follow the social distancing guidance on the NHS website when you need to leave your home.
- Unless otherwise agreed with your clinical team, only one parent or carer should attend dialysis with their child and this should be the same parent or carer for each session. Siblings will not be able to visit the hospital.
- The Renal Association and GOSH recommend that dialysis patients and their parent or carer wear a mask travelling to dialysis and at all times while you are in the hospital. Masks will be provided by the dialysis unit and we will explain how to put it on and wear it. We appreciate that this guidance may be unrealistic for younger children.
- Your dialysis day and time may be subject to change at short notice during this very busy period.
- To reduce any infection risks, patients and parents and carers need to stay in their dialysis space and must not leave Eagle Ward during the treatment time.
- Your child will be provided with meals on haemodialysis. However, parents and carers should bring their own meals and drinks to minimise movement within the ward and hospital.
- Follow the social distancing guidance, only two parents should be in the parent kitchen at any one time if you need to use it.
- When you arrive a member of staff will ask you some questions to screen your child and family for COVID-19 before you come onto the unit.



Symptomatic or COVID-19 positive patients or household members

- If your child or a household member becomes unwell with symptoms of COVID-19, you must inform the Kidney team before your child's dialysis session by calling Eagle Ward on 020 7829 8815 or 020 7829 8817.
- If a parent or carer has symptoms of COVID-19, please find another family member to bring your child to dialysis. Parent and carers who are symptomatic will not be able to visit the hospital.
- Our team will also try to phone every family the morning of their dialysis appointment to screen for COVID-19. However, if your child displays any symptoms of COVID-19, do not wait for this call to let us know. Please inform the Kidney team as soon as possible.
- We will be testing all symptomatic patients attending haemodialysis. We also may ask the parent or carer accompanying them to be tested as well.

Hospital transport

- Transport can pick you up an hour before or after your collection time. There may be a reduction in drivers for patient transport during this time, so please be aware that there may be delays with incoming and outgoing journeys.
- Patients who have cars may be asked to drive their child to dialysis. Parking information is on our website. Mileage will be reimbursed over this period. Speak to the nurse in charge for this information and the relevant forms to complete.

Prescriptions

- One-week notice is required for any repeat medication or equipment prescriptions.

- Please collect your prescriptions on the way into or way out of dialysis – please do not leave the ward to collect it while your child is having dialysis. If your child needs the prescription before you leave, a member of staff will collect it for you.

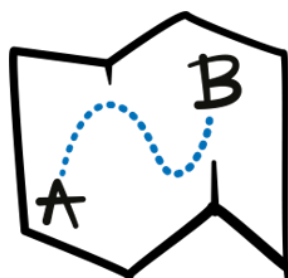
Additional information for Home Haemodialysis (HHD) patients

- Home Haemodialysis patients must ensure they have two weeks back-up stock.
- If your child becomes unwell with symptoms of COVID-19, please do not visit your doctor or pharmacist – use the NHS 111 online service at 111.nhs.uk for urgent medical advice – but also contact the HHD team or Eagle Ward. They may send your child to your local hospital for review.
- Please do not bring your child to Eagle Ward if they are unwell unless this has been arranged with the HHD or Eagle Ward team.
- If a parent or carer who is trained to do the haemodialysis becomes unwell, please contact the HHD team or Eagle Ward so in-centre haemodialysis sessions can be arranged if necessary.

Specific advice about medicines

The risk of stopping your child's medicines and potentially losing their kidney outweighs the risk of developing COVID-19. Your child should continue to take their medicines as usual.

Remember, kidney transplant patients should never take ibuprofen



Should we make alternative clinic appointments?

Our clinical teams are looking at each patient carefully to work out which clinics and consultations can be done another way such as through video or phone calls, which appointments, procedures and admissions can be rescheduled safely, and which patients absolutely need to come into hospital.

Clinic appointments for **in-centre haemodialysis** reviews will continue while your child is on dialysis. Your regular kidney doctors will see your child while they are on dialysis.

For other patients with upcoming clinic appointments, we will be in touch with you to

discuss how we can best carry this out. This may mean that your child is offered a telephone appointment or video consultation.

Under normal circumstances, your child would also have regular blood tests to monitor their kidney function. Where possible and practical, we will arrange for your child to have blood tests locally. We could also ask you to attend GOSH for bloods only.

As we start to re-open our services, we are prioritising children and young people who need our care most urgently. We understand that some families may be worried about visiting GOSH, but if we book a face-to-face visit to the hospital, it's because we think it's important that your child is seen.

Further information and support

Information from the NHS at www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/

Information from the Renal Association at renal.org/renal-association-statement-ppe-use-masks-dialysis-patients/

Information from NICE at www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng160

Information for children is available on the BBC Newsround website at www.bbc.co.uk/newsround

