

Advice for adults with congenital heart disease (ACHD)

Date 20/03/2020, Royal Brompton Hospital

Advice to our ACHD patients

In response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, the government has provided updated guidance for those who fall into the high-risk group identified as people who are at increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus, which includes those who have chronic chest and heart conditions, such as congenital heart disease in adults (ACHD).

There is currently no evidence on the risks of COVID-19 and its complications in patients with congenital heart disease (CHD). However, other cardiovascular disease was found to be related to increased risk of mortality.

In the absence of specific ACHD-related information, **we recommend that patients follow [government guidance](#)** on social distancing: measures that help reduce social interaction between people in order to reduce the transmission of coronavirus. People with underlying health conditions, such as chronic heart disease and ACHD, are advised to follow these measures stringently.

While we recognise that ACHD is a wide spectrum of conditions and severities, there is currently no evidence to guide clinicians to clearly identify ACHD patients who are at low risk and may not need to adhere to the above guidance.

Please make sure that you have enough medication at home, to avoid interruptions to your treatment during this period. You can ask your GP to send your prescription to a pharmacy of your choice, which can be collected on your behalf by a relative or friend.

Changes to our activity

Please note that in order to protect patients and staff:

- To minimise the risk of infection and exposure to COVID-19, all routine outpatient appointments, day case appointments, echocardiograms and other outpatient tests in our hospital have been cancelled and will be rescheduled in due course.
- Any decision to delay planned, non-urgent procedures will be made by the clinical team involved in your care, following a review of your clinical information, and as such, you will be notified.
- Please do not come to the hospital unless told otherwise.
- All necessary support to ACHD patients will be provided by alternative means such as email, telephone or video.
- Patients cases which cannot be managed by alternative (digital) means will be seen at Royal Brompton or Harefield hospitals, or other London specialist hospitals, depending on clinical need and hospital capacity.
- Multidisciplinary team meetings will focus on urgent cases.

Queries and support

If you are unwell, with fever or cough, please follow national guidance and contact 111 (or 999 if severely unwell).

NHS 111 self-assessment portal: <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19>

For any further queries or advice, please contact us via our email achd@rbht.nhs. Please be aware that we are receiving a large volume of calls and emails but we aim to reply as soon as possible. **Please do not contact the hospital unless absolutely necessary.**

We would ask that you regularly visit our website, the NHS and other professional bodies (links below).

We fully appreciate this is a period of great anxiety for all and we know that you will undoubtedly have questions and concerns. We will continue to communicate with our patients and their families by updating information on our website on a regular basis.

General Covid19 information

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

For CHD specific advice please visit:

- The British Congenital cardiac association

https://mcusercontent.com/d932d28514a47e2919aba698d/files/c2088ca5-fe3f-4c0d-a359-2f6a7b61bbcc/COVID_BCCA_Vulnerable_groups_FINAL_18_March_2020.pdf

- The British Heart Foundation

<https://www.bhf.org.uk/informationsupport/heart-matters-magazine/news/coronavirus-and-your-health>

- The Adult Congenital Heart (patient) Association, US

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h0u2qM1phVQ&t=4806s>