

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

We understand that you might be worried about coronavirus – also known as COVID-19 – particularly if your child has a digestive or skin allergy condition. This information sheet from the Gastroenterology and Dermatology Allergy team at Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH) sets out our advice for children, young people and their parents and carers who use our services. Please read this alongside our general information about coronavirus (COVID-19) available at www.gosh.nhs.uk/news/coronavirus-covid-19-information-hub.

We are providing this guidance for children currently under or on the waiting list for our gastrointestinal-allergy and/or dermatology-allergy service.

As the allergy service falls under the main gastroenterology and dermatology teams, you may also have a consultant gastroenterologist or dermatologist overseeing your care.

If your child has not been referred to the service and/or do not have a gastroenterology or dermatologist overseeing their care, this letter may not apply to your child. Please notify us so that we can correct our clinical records.

Does COVID-19 affect children?

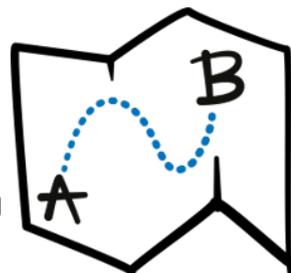
The evidence to date shows that although children do develop COVID-19, very few children will develop severe symptoms with COVID-19.

Should we make alternative clinic appointments?

Clinicians are removing the need for patients to attend face-to-face appointments wherever possible. This may result in telephone appointments or a video consultation, or deferring a review until after the COVID-19 precautions are relaxed.

Any decisions to postpone procedures, admissions or appointments are based on careful consideration by the clinical team. If your child has an upcoming clinic appointment, we will be in touch with you to discuss how we can best carry this out remotely. If necessary, your child will also be given a face-to-face appointment in the future.

Please note the telephone appointment may be carried out by our specialist paediatric dietitian, as other members of the team may need to be redeployed. Please be assured that treatment plans will be discussed and agreed in advance with the entire allergy team.



Where can I find more information for my child's condition?

To help you in supporting the management of your child's condition(s), we have included a list of useful websites and contact numbers below. Please be aware that this is a generic letter, so not all will be relevant for your child. If you are unsure which apply or have any questions, please contact your clinical team.

Allergy

- If your child has an allergic reaction, please follow their recommended allergy management plan.
 - Action plans available from:
www.bsaci.org/about/download-paediatric-allergy-action-plans
 - If you require training on how to administer Adrenaline Auto-Injectors- Please check your brand of adrenaline autoinjector device (links below):
 - JEXT www.kids.jext.co.uk
 - Emerade www.emerade-bausch.co.uk/patient
 - Epipen www.epipen.co.uk/patients/epipenr-user-guide
 - Please keep all your child's emergency management with them at all times.
- If your baby is ready to start eating solid foods and has eczema and/or a pre-existing food allergy, then you may wish to consider introducing cooked egg and then peanut early into their diet from 4 months of age. Please do not do this if your child has previously reacted to these foods or been advised to avoid these foods by your allergy team). Please see further guidance here:
www.bsaci.org/pdf/Infant-feeding-and-allergy-prevention-PARENTS-FINAL-booklet.pdf
- Other useful information:
 - www.itchysneezywheezy.co.uk
 - www.allergyuk.org/information-and-advice/conditions-and-symptoms

- <https://bsaci.worldsecuresystems.com/Coronavirus%20and%20Allergies%20FAQ%20and%20Answers%20FINAL%5B1%5D.pdf>

- If you are very worried that your child is having an allergic reaction, please call 999 or 111 depending on the urgency.

Asthma

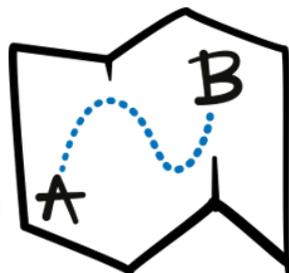
- Follow your child's wheeze management plan – contact your GP or 111 for advice if needed.
- If you feel your child is very unwell, please do not delay, phone 999 and/or seek urgent medical advice.
- Please ALWAYS use your preventer inhaler and medication as prescribed:
 - Beclomethasone/Clenil Modulite, Symbicort, Seretide - these are usually your brown, purple or orange inhalers
 - Montelukast Sodium/Singulair
- If you require guidance on inhaler technique or nasal spray technique please visit www.asthma.org.uk/advice/inhalers-medicines-treatments/using-inhalers/
- If your child's medications have been left at school or elsewhere, please collect them if possible
- For further information about asthma and COVID-19, visit www.asthma.org.uk/advice/triggers/coronaviruss-covid-19/.

Exclusion diets

We understand that your child may already be following a diet free from certain allergens and that you maybe be worried about the provision of this allergen-free food.

We have been assured that regular deliveries are going ahead; although we appreciate that it is becoming increasingly difficult to find some products with ease and choice may be limited.

There are online supermarkets that may be able to deliver where the usual commercial



supermarkets cannot. Please see a list of useful companies below:

- www.goodnessdirect.co.uk
- www.britishonlinesupermarket.com
- www.britishgram.com
- www.milkandmore.co.uk
- www.findmeamilkman.net – many local milk delivery services are extending foods they offer for delivery. Please take a look at what is available in your local area.

For further support finding suitable free-from products, we would recommend downloading the FoodMaestro app.

If your child is on a specialist prescribed formula, they should continue with this. These provisions will continue to be provided by your local pharmacy. Specialist formula will only be prescribed if your dietitian feels there is a clinical need.

Wheat or gluten free

- Unfortunately, gluten-free products are generally no longer available on prescription, although some GPs may still be able to prescribe these products. Please contact your GP directly to find out what they can offer.
- There are many foods which are naturally gluten free and can be used as a suitable alternative for manufactured gluten-free products. These include buckwheat, polenta, maize, potato, rice, quinoa and tapioca, which are all gluten free.

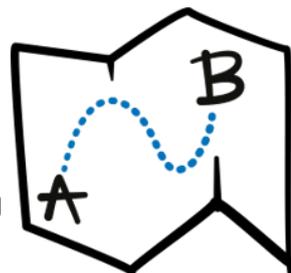
Milk or dairy free

- Please continue to provide your child with their usual plant-based milk. Please note that rice milk is NOT suitable for children under the age of 5 years. You should always opt for calcium fortified plant-based milks (not organic).
- If your child is on a dairy-free diet and their usual plant-based milk is not available, it is important to ensure they have enough calcium in their diet. This may mean that if supply is an

issue, you need to start giving your child a calcium supplement. The table below shows calcium requirement by age:

Age		Calcium RNI (mg/day)
Months	0 – 12	524
Years	1 – 3	352
	4 – 6	452
	7 – 10	552
	Boys	
	11 – 14	1000
	15 – 18	1000
	Girls	
	11 – 14	800
15 – 18	800	

- You can buy over-the-counter (OTC) calcium supplements from your local supermarket or pharmacy. Please see below for a list of readily available OTC products:
 - Vitabiotics WellKid Liquid Calcium (Age 4+). Please note this product is suitable for children below 4 years. Please give a dose of 5ml of a child under 4 years or check with your dietitian.
 - Haliborange Softies Calcium and Vitamin D (Age 3+). Please note this product may be a choking hazard for children under 3 years.
 - Boots Essential calcium and vitamin D (Age 11+). Please note this product is suitable for children over the age of 11.
- Remember there are also many other dietary sources of calcium that you can include as part of your child's diet, depending on their other known allergies. Bread, fortified breakfast cereal, tahini paste (contains sesame), sardines, spinach, broccoli, baked bean and dried apricots are all high in calcium.
- If you cannot buy calcium supplements over the counter and are worried about your child's calcium intake please contact you GP or GOSH dietitian.



Egg

- If you are struggling to get hold of your usual egg replacer to use in baking, please note you can use “flax egg”, apple sauce or mashed banana as alternatives.

Soya

- If you are unable to find your usual soya products, please look for alternative plant-based milk or plant based products. If these are not fortified with calcium and you do not feel your child is getting enough calcium through other dietary sources, please start a calcium supplement as per guidance above.

What precautions should I take for my child?

You should follow precautions to avoid infection, through good personal hygiene, hand washing, not touching eyes, nose and mouth and avoiding unnecessary close contact with people who are unwell.

Please keep all of your child’s medications with them at all times and familiarise yourself with how and when to use their emergency medications if required.

Should we stop taking our medication if we get coronavirus?

No, taking your medication is very important and not taking it could make your condition worse. Please do not hesitate to consult your specialty team before making any decisions regarding your medication.

If your child shows symptoms of COVID-19 (persistent cough and/or high temperature of 37.8

Further information and support

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

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

and above), visit the [NHS 111 online service](https://www.nhs.uk/111) for urgent medical advice.

What should I do if my child is unwell?

Should your child become unwell then you should access 111 (111.nhs.uk) or your GP. If your child becomes very unwell or you are concerned, or your 111 or GP advise it, you should call 999 or attend your local A&E.

Please note that your nearest A&E for children may have changed, and you should check online or with 111 to find your nearest A&E for children.

Who should I contact if I have an urgent clinical query?

If you have registered with MyGOSH, you can contact our dietitians or specialist nurse via the app. If you are not registered, we can help you do so – as this is our preferred method of communication. Information about MyGOSH can be found at: www.gosh.nhs.uk/your-hospital-visit/mygosh

If this is not an option, or you need help to register, please email:

Gastroenterology-allergy:
gastroenterology.medicalpa@gosh.nhs.uk

Dermatology-allergy:
RDadmin@gosh.nhs.uk

We are here to support you, and we are grateful for your understanding during this time.

Thank you.

