

# COVID-19: What to Know?

## My child has kidney disease. Are they at higher risk of getting sick?



The Center for Disease Control (CDC) states that adults with serious medical conditions are at a higher risk of getting sick from COVID-19, but there is not enough supporting data to state that children with kidney disease are included in this risk. Based on what is known thus far, children are much less likely than adults to get severely sick from COVID-19.

In an important study of over 2,000 pediatric patients that tested positive for COVID-19 in China, only one child died. Of the 2,000 patients, most cases presented with mild symptoms. 5.9% of the mild cases were in children, compared to 18.5% of the cases being adults.

There is still much more to be learned about how the disease impacts children; especially those with kidney disease. For children with kidney transplants, there is very little supportive information on whether COVID-19 infection will be more severe.

There is an article from Northern Italy that reports on 700 pediatric liver transplant patients. Of the 700 patients, none identified as having severe COVID-19.

Please take all precautions until we understand more about how COVID-19 impacts children with kidney disease.

## What is “Social Distancing”?



Stay at home! If you must leave your home, keep at least 6 feet between yourself and others, and wear a mask or cloth face covering. This is a very important way to slow down the spread of COVID-19 and “flatten the curve.”

As there is still not a lot of data to support how COVID-19 affects the transplant community, this document was created in hopes of assisting kidney transplant parents/caregivers with their concerns. Below outlines the most common questions asked during this time:

## What should I do to keep my family safe?



As the caregiver of a child with kidney disease, your family should already be taking preventative measures to protect yourselves from germs and infections. Continue those healthy habits and take extra every extra precaution you can!

### Encourage your family to be health heroes!

- Continue to take all prescribed medication. Keep at least four weeks of medicine available, as pharmacies may get crowded.
- Get immunosuppression and other regular lab work/procedures done when instructed by your care team.
- Wash your hands for 20 seconds. If you are unsure how long 20 seconds is, just sing “Happy Birthday” twice!
- 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 and wear a mask or cloth face covering. When you return home, wash your hands, change your clothes, place clothes in the washing machine, and wash your hands again.
- Encourage children to be careful while playing to prevent injuries; limiting exposure to doctors/hospitals.

## What is “Flattening the Curve”?

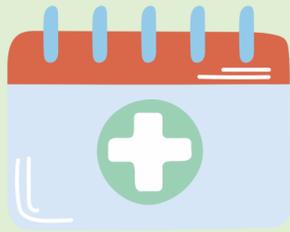


If large numbers of people get sick with COVID-19 our hospitals won’t have enough medical staff, equipment, or beds to care for them; let alone be able to care for others with non-COVID 19 medical issues.

### What can I do to help prevent this?

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.

## Why was my 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 calls. 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 end up seeing different providers than you're used to, as this aids in limiting exposure for the patients and the providers.

If you, or your child is sick, you **MUST** call your care team before arriving for the appointment.

## 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!
- 7- Ask: Is this true? Is it helpful? Is there a more positive or constructive thought I can focus on?
- 8- 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](http://www.cdc.gov)

## 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 is a great way to stay connected and keep your scheduled appointments without the risk of spreading sickness.

## 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 (checking for fever, questionnaire, etc.)
- 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 masks and gowns.
- Visitor policies may be different.
- Food offerings may be limited. Cafeterias may be closed.

## When should I contact my care team?



Call or email your care team anytime you have questions or you have things you want to talk about.

This is a time of uncertainty, but they 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.