

Advice for parents and families

Our team and ECHO have had many calls from worried families and we will endeavour to answer those as clearly as we can. However specific information about coronavirus (COVID-19) in children, particularly children with long-term health conditions, including congenital or acquired heart disease, is currently limited.

Many of the enquiries we have had relate to current recommendations about avoiding contact with others. All the latest information can be found on the [NHS website](#) and the official [UK Government website](#). This includes information about the virus, advice for travellers from other affected areas, and what to do if you develop symptoms. National guidance is being kept under regular review and this is the best place to find the most up to date information.

The British Congenital Cardiac Association have published [their recommendations](#) after consideration of the available evidence. Currently, their recommendations mirror the NHS guidelines with the additional comment, 'Please be mindful of avoiding putting yourself in a position that increases your risk.' You can keep up to date on the [latest guidance on their website](#).

Additional support

As information about Coronavirus unfolds, there can be a wide range of thoughts, feelings and reactions, such as feeling sad, stressed, confused, scared or angry. These are all very normal and understandable responses to what is happening.

Whilst it is important to follow up-to-date advice as the situation develops, the following self-help tools are known to be helpful in managing stress and anxiety. If after trying these, you feel that you need further support you should speak to your GP who will be able to recommend the best local support for you.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) have provided advice for parents and carers to support with [children feeling stressed by the coronavirus situation](#) (PDF).

Relaxation, mindfulness, distraction and grounding can all be helpful tools for coping with anxiety and stress. You can find some quick and simple exercises on the NHS website, including:

[Mindful breathing](#)

[A breathing exercise for stress/anxiety](#)

The mental health charity Mind have [tips and exercise to help relaxation](#) (PDF).

There are also lots of apps with some great tools for managing emotions. A list of NHS approved App is available at: nhs.uk/apps-library

Contacting our team

Our team will do their best to answer any additional queries you may have. We appreciate it may be frustrating if we are unable to answer your questions with absolute certainty, but we hope you understand this is a completely unique situation.

We want to make sure that any information we give is as accurate and consistent as possible, as well as being based on up to date information.

Please check the [Evelina London website](#) for the latest information for children and their families.

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13 March 2020