

Coronavirus Guidance for Adult & Pediatric Patients

Congenital Heart Disease (CHD)

Updated 03/12/2020

We are monitoring statewide and national recommendations closely.

The coronavirus pandemic is a rapidly evolving situation, and the medical community continues to learn more about the virus and how it is spread. We are monitoring CDC recommendations and adjusting our recommendations as necessary.

Everyone – including patients with chronic medical conditions – should practice basic infection control preventions to minimize the risk of getting or spreading coronavirus.

Please read about [basic prevention guidelines](#), which apply to all populations.

Additional guidance for our patients from the congenital heart disease care team at Michigan Medicine includes:

High Risk Conditions

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) identifies certain patient populations at higher risk for serious illness with COVID-19. This includes older adults (greater than age 60), and patients with lung disease, heart disease, and diabetes. Many patients with repaired congenital heart disease are not likely at risk for severe illness with COVID-19 and can practice basic prevention guidelines. The Michigan Medicine Congenital Heart Center has identified the following high risk congenital cardiac conditions:

- Single ventricle patients (includes patients with hypoplastic left heart syndrome, tricuspid atresia, and double inlet left ventricle).
- Pulmonary hypertension
- Unrepaired complex congenital heart disease

- Other chronic illnesses (lung disease)
- Transplant patients
- Patients with symptomatic heart failure (those with activity limitations), decreased heart function, or heart failure with preserved ejection fraction.

Precautions

Per CDC recommendations, we recommend the following precautions for these high risk patients:

- [Stock up on supplies.](#)
- Take [everyday precautions](#) to keep space between yourself and others
- When you go out in public, keep away from others who are sick, limit close contact and wash your hands often
- Avoid crowds as much as possible
- Avoid cruise travel and non-essential air travel
- During a COVID-19 outbreak in your community, stay home as much as possible to further reduce the risk of being exposed.

Use of Face Masks

- The benefit of wearing masks in public is controversial (even for immunosuppressed patients) and it is unknown how much wearing a mask will help prevent infection. Most surgical masks are not tight fitting and aerosols can get through. **Neither the Congenital Heart Center nor the CDC are recommending mask use for infection protection outside the hospital at this time.**

School Attendance

- Effective 3/12/20, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer announced that all K-12 schools in Michigan will be required to close from March 16 to April 5. Classes will be allowed to begin again on April 6 unless the situation changes.
- We are monitoring statewide and national recommendations closely.
- We are currently not recommending our patients to stay home from school if schools in your community are still operating normally.

- If a family has concerns about school or work attendance, the patient's physician should be contacted for recommendations or an excuse letters.

Travel Recommendations

- We are currently discouraging all international travel. Travel within the United States should be undertaken with caution and is discouraged in high risk patients.

Work Recommendations

- We are discouraging high risk patients from working jobs with significant exposure to others (i.e., retail establishments such as Starbucks).
- For patients employed in health-care related fields, we are currently recommending that high-risk patients avoid contact with all patients with respiratory illness.
- Patients, particularly high risk patients, are encouraged to work from home if feasible.

Preparation

We recommend patients follow [guidelines for stocking up on supplies from the CDC website](#) regarding supplies that may be needed if you need to be isolated for a period of time.

Contact your healthcare provider's office with additional questions.