



# Assessing children with COVID like symptoms

GP guide for remote consultation during COVID-19  
Pandemic in paediatric patients

**For the latest data/evidence on the incidence of  
COVID-19 in children visit:**

<https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/covid-19-service-evaluation-audit-care-needs-children-admitted-hospital-england>

<https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/covid-19-research-evidence-summaries#-summary>

## Summary of latest findings

- COVID-19 appears to affect children less often, and with less severity, with frequent asymptomatic or subclinical infection.
- Evidence of critical illness is rare in children.
- Changes in laboratory or radiographic parameters are slightly different to adults, and changes are usually mild.
- Early evidence suggests that infants are no more severely affected than other groups.

# GP guide for remote consultation during COVID-19 Pandemic in paediatric patients under 16 years of age

## Proposed Assessment pathway

### For ALL children under 16:

- As always - be aware about SAFEGUARDING issues
- Video consult wherever possible: video consulting software now freely and readily available - the importance of this will become more apparent later but there is no replacement for SEEING a potentially sick child
- General guidance on remote consulting can be found in the following links: [Specialty guides for patient management during the coronavirus pandemic](#) [Clinical guide for the management of remote consultations and remote working in secondary care during the coronavirus pandemic](#) AND [primary care guidance from the BMJ](#)
- **PLEASE REMEMBER** - not all calls about paediatric patients are going to be because of febrile and/or respiratory illness and many of these other conditions can be managed just as well remotely
- BWC/UHB General Paediatric Services will aim to support primary care assessment with advice and guidance to facilitate quick decision-making and flow when needed. Co-ordinating a system wide paediatric provider response will enable enhanced responsiveness.
- As always - in complex children or those with underlying chronic conditions where you are unsure seek Paediatric advice - USE PAIRS or existing pathways - Paediatrics are fully aware that these are difficult times and will support decision making

### There are two options for contacting Paediatrics Consultant Led

- **BWC PAIRS telephone advice and guidance:** Tel: 0121 333 8170  
- Service available: Mon-Friday: 11 00 - 13 00 hours and 15 00 - 17 00 hours.
- **UHB Paediatric advice line** Tel: 07956662852  
- Service available 9am to 7 pm, seven days a week.
- Outside these hours the paediatric registrar can be bleeped via hospital switch board.
- Both services available to ANY primary care clinician THROUGHOUT Birmingham and Solihull

# Table 1: Clinical assessment

Please note this is for the assessment of ALL unwell children and NOT just COVID-19 – this is to guide your clinical judgement and allow for you to make a decision about the need for further face to face consultation

	Green - Low risk	Amber - Intermediate risk	Red - High risk
<b>Behaviour</b> - easily observed by video consultation or ask the pertinent questions to the parent	Alert  Normal	Irritable  Not responding normally to social cues  Decreased activity  No smile	Unable to rouse / Wakes only with prolonged stimulation  No response to social cues Weak, high pitched or continuous cry / Appears ill to health care professional
<b>Circulation</b> - PARENTS CAN DO THIS WITH INSTRUCTION FROM THE GP - 'press on the sternum for 5 seconds and let go and count how many seconds it takes to go pink again' - even better if you can see this on video	CRT less than 2 secs	CRT 2-3 secs	CRT over 3 secs
<b>Skin</b> - can be observed by video consultation or ask the pertinent questions to the parent	Normal colour skin, lips & tongue Moist mucous membranes	Pale / mottled Pallor reported by parent/carer  Cool peripheries	Pale/mottled/blue Cyanotic lips and tongue
<b>Respiratory rate</b> - can be observed by video consultation or ask the pertinent questions to the parent	Under 12mths: less than 50  Over 12mths: less than 40  No respiratory distress	Under 12mths: 50-60 breaths/minute  Over 12mths: 40-60 breaths/minute	All ages: Over 60 breaths / minute
<b>Sats in air</b> - NOT POSSIBLE BY VIDEO CONSULT - if this is needed then consider speaking to paed, referring to AMBER site for a face to face consultation.	95% or above	92-94%	less than 92%
<b>Chest recession</b> - can be observed by video consultation or ask the pertinent questions to the parent	None	Moderate	Severe
<b>Nasal Flaring</b> - can be observed by video consultation or ask the pertinent questions to the parent	Absent	May be present	Present
<b>Grunting</b> - can be observed by video consultation or ask the pertinent questions to the parent	Absent	Absent	Present
<b>Feeding/Hydration</b> - ask the pertinent questions to the parent	Normal - no vomiting	50-75% fluid intake over 3-4 feeds +/- vomiting Reduced urine output	under 50% fluid intake over 2-3 feeds +/- vomiting Significantly reduced urine output
<b>Apnoeas</b> - ask the pertinent questions to the parent	Absent	Absent	Present

	Green -Low risk	Amber - Intermediate risk	Red - High risk
Management	<p>Child can be managed at home with appropriate care and advice. Provide verbal / written information about warning signs and when to seek further advice -</p> <p><b>See local and national links below for PIL leaflets</b></p> <p><b>Empower parents so they know what to look out for and what to do</b></p>	<p>If unsure, please contact Paediatrics as above or use the amber pathway for face to face consultation</p> <p><b>See local and national links below for PIL - leaflets</b></p> <p><b>Empower parents so they know what to look out for and what to do</b></p>	<p>Send child for urgent assessment in hospital setting.</p> <p><b>REFER via Paediatrics as above/ consider 999 if needed</b></p>

**For mental health urgent matters please follow your usual process. The support telephone numbers are available at:**

<https://www.birminghamandsolihullccg.nhs.uk/your-health/mental-health-support-offer>

**Guide for parents and carers of children from 0-5 - common childhood illnesses [pdf] 6MB**

<https://bwc.nhs.uk/download.cfm?doc=docm93jijm4n2987.pdf&ver=4409>

**Patient Information leaflets (and advice for Professionals) on the Big 6 reasons for unscheduled care and Top Twenty Paediatric conditions referred to outpatients**

<https://bwc.nhs.uk/assessment-tools/>

**Patient.co.uk**

<https://patient.info/> - search for condition specific Patient Information Leaflets

**NHS UK**

<https://www.nhs.uk/> - search for condition specific Patient Information Leaflets