

## COVID-19 AND ADRENAL INSUFFICIENCY/SUPPRESSION

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, new data are arising on population risk for infection. The below information is current as of the date of the document. We will do our best to provide you with research-based, up-to-date information.

### Is my child at increased risk of getting sick with COVID?

The most recent data show that there is a **significantly increased risk** of severe illness (hospitalization and ICU admissions) in children with adrenal insufficiency/suppression who contract COVID. There may be a link between low levels of cortisol and the effectiveness of the immune system. Based on our current knowledge, we **strongly** recommend very careful stress dosing of the hydrocortisone or prednisone. See below "What can I do to protect my child?"

### Should my child get the COVID vaccine?

We **strongly** recommend that all children with adrenal insufficiency 12 years and older receive both doses of the COVID vaccine. The only exception would be for the tiny number of children who are also receiving chemotherapy. We know that children with adrenal insufficiency do not get sicker than other children when they receive the vaccine. As the vaccine becomes available for younger children in late 2021-2022, we also strongly recommend that they be vaccinated ASAP.

### Should my child attend school in person?

We recommend that children with adrenal insufficiency attend school according to the current guidelines from the BC Ministry of Health. More information here:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/covid-19-safe-schools>

### What can I do to protect my child?

- ✓ Take your medications as prescribed by your Endocrinologist.
- ✓ Be very aware of any symptoms of illness in your child/youth and give a **triple dose** of your usual hydrocortisone (Cortef) **every 6 hours**, or of your usual prednisone or prednisolone (Pediapred) **every 12 hours**, as soon as the symptoms are recognized.
- ✓ Give your child's dose of Solu-Cortef (injectable hydrocortisone) if your child is vomiting, has diarrhea, breaks a major bone, has a seizure or is unconscious.
- ✓ Call 811 to determine if your child needs COVID testing.
- ✓ Call the BCCH Endocrinologist on call at 604-875-2161 if your child tests positive for COVID, so that we ensure you are giving the proper stress dose of your steroid hormone.
- ✓ Monitor your child closely, especially in the night for worsening symptoms.
- ✓ It is recommended that you get the influenza (flu) shot for your child and family.
- ✓ Continue to follow the provincial Health Guidelines around masking and social distancing.