
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 realize the challenges parents face as they make decisions for their children's health and wellbeing. We will do our best to provide you with research-based, up-to-date information.

Should my child go back to school in person in September?

This is a decision each family needs to make for their situation and comfort level. Providing that community transmission numbers remain low, it seems it would be okay for your child to go to school in September. Measures that schools are taking should help to decrease the risk of the virus spread. See link for measures being implemented in schools:

www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf

Is my child at increased risk of contracting COVID-19?

Recent data on adrenal insufficiency/suppression and COVID-19 show that there may be a potential for increased risk of infection in **adults** with adrenal insufficiency/suppression. There may be a link between low levels of cortisol and effectiveness of the immune system. Based on the adult data, there may be an increased risk of COVID-19 infection in children/youth with adrenal insufficiency/suppression, if they are not receiving adequate replacement (missing doses, not stress-dosing appropriately). Currently the number of cases of children (<19 years) with COVID-19 in Canada is low (~8% of total cases). The BC number of cases <19 years is ~7%.¹

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 steroid (hydrocortisone/Cortef or prednisone/Pediapred) 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-19 testing.
- ✓ Call the BCCH Endocrinologist on call at 604-875-2161 if your child tests positive for COVID-19, as you may need to increase the frequency 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 social distancing.

¹BC COVID-19 Dashboard: <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/a6f23959a8b14bfa989e3cda29297ded>