

COVID-19 – Questions to Ask Your Child’s MEDICAL Team

★ General Responses from the Herma Heart Institute

1. Is my child at a greater risk for contracting COVID-19 because of his/her underlying health condition?

★ Currently, the incidence of COVID-19 in children remains low. While kids with complex medical conditions make up a relatively high percentage of all pediatric cases, it’s still a very small number of the overall published cases. Our doctors are closely and constantly monitoring COVID-19 and how it affects heart families.

2. Is my child at a greater risk for a severe COVID-19-related complications because of his/her underlying health condition?

★ To date, we have not seen increased cardiac complications in children and young adults with congenital heart disease at the Herma Heart Institute. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has noted that people of any age with certain underlying medical conditions are at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19; the CDC recently added congenital heart disease to its list of conditions that may be a risk factor. Our cardiologists continue to monitor reports from the CDC on congenital heart disease and COVID-19, as well as review the latest research and data from other pediatric hospitals.

3. How can I keep my child safe during COVID-19?

★ We encourage you to continue to follow social distancing guidelines (maintaining a distance of at least 6 feet from people not in your household), wash hands regularly and avoid contact between children and elderly adults, including relatives. Anyone over 2 years of age should wear a mask when they leave their home.

4. Can my child safely return to school in the fall?

★ Returning to school safely is based on a number of factors, including the severity and complexity of your child’s condition, your school district’s guidelines, as well as your comfort with returning to public spaces. At this time, we encourage you to review your school district’s guidelines to help determine whether or not to return to school.

5. Does my child need to wear a mask at school?

★ Anyone over 2 years of age should wear a mask when they leave their home.

6. Does sending my other children to school/daycare put my child with an underlying health condition at risk for contracting COVID-19?

★ Currently, the incidence of COVID-19 in children remains low; however they can still be carriers of the illness, even if they do not demonstrate symptoms themselves. Increased exposure by any household members to other children and adults outside the primary household can increase the risk of contracting COVID-19. The decision to send other children to school/daycare should be made on an individual basis through consultation with your child’s doctor.

7. Will the medical team write a letter stating I need to stay home from work to care for my child?

★ These types of letters are not commonly provided and depend on the complexity of your child’s medical condition. This request should be discussed directly with your child’s doctor.