

6<sup>th</sup> December 2022

Children and Families Division  
Birmingham Community Healthcare  
NHS Foundation Trust  
Moseley Hall Hospital  
Alcester Road  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor Old Hall  
Birmingham  
B13 8JL

Dear Parent/Carer

It is not unusual to see a rise in the number of respiratory viral infections during the winter months causing colds, coughs, sore throats and runny noses being common many of which resolve without any medical intervention. On rare occasions children can also develop a bacterial infection alongside a virus and that can make them more unwell.

This year the data is showing the bacterial infections including Group A Strep in children are at a higher rates than is normally seen at this time of year. Strep A is a very common bacteria that can be treated and serious complications from the infection are rare. However, the recent press reports have informed us of this and in a few cases sadly a small number of children have died this may of raised concerns for your child's health.

As a parent or carer you know your child best therefore we urge you to trust your own judgement and keep a look out for signs your baby/child illness is getting worse and treatment can be sought to stop it becoming serious. If you feel that your child's illness is more than the common cold, contact NHS 111 or your GP in the first instance: We would advise you do this if:

- Your baby is under 3 months old and has a temperature of 38°C (101°F) or higher
- Your baby is 3 to 6 months old and has a temperature of 39°C (102°F) or higher
- Your child feels hotter than usual when you touch their back or chest, or feels sweaty
- Your child's fever lasts for more than 5 days or your child is becoming more unwell.
- Your baby is feeding less than normal - this means that they are taking less than half of their normal feeds and having less than two wet nappies a day

- Your child is eating less than normal and has a dry nappy/not passed urine for 12 hours or more or shows other signs of dehydration below:

Babies	Children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a sunken soft spot (fontanelle) on top of their head</li> <li>• sunken eyes</li> <li>• few or no tears when they cry</li> <li>• not having many wet nappies</li> <li>• being drowsy or irritable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• feeling thirsty</li> <li>• dark yellow, strong-smelling pee</li> <li>• peeing less often than usual</li> <li>• feeling dizzy or lightheaded</li> <li>• feeling tired</li> <li>• a dry mouth, lips and tongue</li> <li>• sunken eyes</li> </ul>

- Your child is tired/irritable, crying constantly, and you can't console or distract them, or the cry doesn't sound like their normal cry (such as high pitched)

***If your child is in the care of the Children's Community Nursing Team, Children's Palliative Care Team you can also contact the Children's Rapid Response Team***

**Call 999 or go to A&E immediately if:**

- Your baby/child is having difficulty breathing – you may notice grunting noises or their tummy sucking under their ribs
- There are pauses when your baby/child breathes  
Your baby/child has a blue tinge (colour) to - lips, tongue, gums, skin, ears, nail beds (may not be all areas)
- Your baby/child is floppy and will not wake up or stay awake
- Your child develops a red rash that doesn't fade when a glass is rolled over it
- Your child has a fit (convulsion)

You and your child can help to stop the spread of the winter viruses and reduce your risk of catching one by:

- Washing hands properly with soap for 20 seconds
- Using a tissue to catch coughs and sneezes
- Keeping away from others when feeling unwell

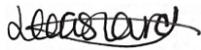
We would encourage you to ensure that your child's vaccinations are up to date to give them the best protection this winter and we hope you and your children stay healthy over the winter period, information and advice will change so please see links below for the most up to date information:

<https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/news-events/news/rcpch-calls-paediatricians-think-group-strep>

[www.gov.uk/government/news/ukhsa-update-on-scarlet-fever-and-invasive-group-a-strep#:~:text=Therefore%2C%20look%20out%20for%20symptoms,will%20have%20a%20sandpapery%20feel.](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/ukhsa-update-on-scarlet-fever-and-invasive-group-a-strep#:~:text=Therefore%2C%20look%20out%20for%20symptoms,will%20have%20a%20sandpapery%20feel.)

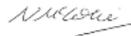
*If you have missed some of your child's routine vaccinations and wish to get up to date please contact your health visitor or GP they will be able to advise you on how to do this.*

Yours sincerely



Joanna Peasland

Associate Chief of  
Nursing and Therapies  
Children & Families Division



Neal McCathie

Medical Director  
Children & Families Division

