



Recommendations for returning to school or daycare for children with congenital or acquired heart disease

We understand that back-to-school is a cause for some concern in many parents of patients at the Montreal Children's Hospital and want to provide our families with our clear recommendations to help you better understand which patients should not return to the classroom.

The majority of the children followed by Cardiology at the Montreal Children's Hospital can go to school and should not develop significant symptoms from COVID-19. However, there are particular conditions or severe forms of disease in some children, and they may be more affected by COVID-19. As detailed below, we recommend those children stay home. Please note that doctor's notes will only be provided to children who meet the criteria outlined in this document and decisions made about school exclusions are guided by MSSS guidelines.

For children returning to school, good hygiene including social distancing and frequent, effective handwashing for 20 seconds with soap and water are essential. Healthy siblings can also return to school. Of course, they need to practice good hygiene, including social distancing at school and effective handwashing, after coming home.

In situations where we think your child can return to school, you can also return to work. In situations where we recommend that your child stays home, you may still return to work but practice good hygiene, including social distancing at work, effective handwashing, and showering and changing clothes once you've arrived home. To simplify matters, we would like to address the most common conditions of the patients we follow.

1. The following cardiac conditions do not warrant automatic school exclusions, but should be evaluated by your child's cardiologist before making a decision to return to school because of potential increased risk:

- Severe pulmonary hypertension;
- Patients with unoperated cyanogenic heart disease;
- Patients awaiting transplants or post-cardiac transplant patients;
- Patients with severe heart failure;
- Decompensated Fontan palliation including exudative enteropathy;
- If damage to other organs or systems in addition to the heart, evaluation by another specialist may be required.

If your child's cardiac condition is not listed above, he or she can return to school or daycare. Should you still have questions about the information contained in this document, please call 514-412-4400 ext. 23269.