



Thank you to everyone who submitted a question for this Meet the Doctor session! We regret that we can't answer all of your questions, especially if it was very specific or about an individual case, but we have done our best to pull together some info for our FAQs below.

As always, we would always recommend you call your healthcare professional directly if you are in any doubt at all or have any questions about your baby.

Question One – Chronic Lung Disease

Amy: So, a lot of the questions understandably are about COVID-19 and the situation that we find ourselves in at the moment, so if you don't mind I'm going to go through them one by one and we'll work up some advice for these parents. So, a lot of the questions were about children who have had **Chronic Lung Disease**, either in the past when they had just come out of the Unit or those who have it currently, what advice would you give those parents?

Nick: I think one of the important things to emphasize is that most of the government advice around who constitutes high-risk is around people who have problems with their immune system, for example those having treatment for cancer.

The reassuring thing is in all the studies that we've seen so far there doesn't seem to be a particularly high risk of babies or infants becoming unwell with Coronavirus. Even babies with Chronic Lung Disease most likely have pretty normal immune systems. In general terms, we think that most children who were born premature and most children who have Chronic Lung Disease are probably going to be okay even if they do get it.

Most of the studies seem to suggest that - over the first one or two years - most children who have Chronic Lung Disease, and most of those who are discharged on oxygen when they first come home, by the time they're two years old most of their lung function is actually pretty normal. I think we can be generally reassured that they probably would manage Coronavirus if they got it pretty much the same as other children.

Amy: Great, so basically if your child has had CLD, no matter what age they are they're likely to have grown out of it by 2 and there is no reason for panic.

Nick: I agree. Yes absolutely, yes.

Question Two – Pneumothorax, Chest Infections and Bronchiolitis

Amy: We've had a few families asking if their child is at any more risk if they have had a **pneumothorax** either at birth or just after birth, or in fact if they're prone to **Bronchiolitis** or **chest infections** - would you give similar advice?

Nick: Yes, most children who have had a pneumothorax find it causes a problem in the first few days when they're on the Unit. Once you've been discharged and once you've gone home, you can pretty much forget about having had a pneumothorax. There's no evidence that these children would be any different in later life, so I would say pneumothorax is not a reason to be specifically concerned about children at all.

Question Three – Future Hospital Appointments

Amy: I know especially on the Buddy Group, which is a really popular page that our parents use, there have been questions about **future appointments**, so whether that's just a little check-up or anything that had booked in for a while, they're wondering how the current circumstances will impact these appointments?

Nick: So, we want to be sensible and make sure that we don't bring children back to hospital at the minute whilst there's Coronavirus around, although it's important that we keep in contact with families and make sure that they're growing okay and that the development is OK.

We think that quite a lot of this can be done by telephone, so we have a list of all the babies and children who should be coming to clinic. The secretaries or one of us will be contacting these families the week before they're due to come to clinic and arranging to have a conversation with

them to discuss any ongoing concerns or issues, and most the time we will do that by telephone or occasionally we might do it using a video link.

So, you should be getting a phone call from us the week prior to your appointment. If you're worried you can contact the secretary. When you've been to clinic and you get a letter, the number to contact our secretary is at the top of that letter and you can contact us if you have specific concerns.

There will be a few children where it's important we do see them in clinic, we want to reassure families that we understand their concerns and anxieties about coming back to hospital, but you can be reassured that it's a very safe place most the time. As long as people are washing their hands and being sensible there really isn't any risk coming to a clinic