

Coronavirus: COVID-19

Information for transplant professionals

18th Edition, 22nd January 2021

This document provides information about COVID-19 for transplant professionals and links to the latest information and resources from the NHS, Government and professional societies.

LATEST NEWS

Government advice on people who are clinically extremely vulnerable

England: [here](#)

Scotland: [here](#)

Wales: [here](#)

Northern Ireland: [here](#)

Vaccination against COVID-19

Government/ Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) advice: [here](#)

and go to 'vaccination' section

Medical and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) guidance: [here](#)

Access NHSBT [here](#) for

- **Most recent guidance, including**
 - Vaccination against COVID-19
 - FAQs
 - OTDT/BTS guidance on SARS-CoV-2 vaccination in adult solid organ and islet transplant wait-listed patients and adult living donor transplant recipients
 - Infection surge planning
 - SARS-CoV-2 assessment and screening in organ donors and recipients
 - Transplant unit SARS-CoV-2 outbreak prevention and management guidance
 - Transplant centre restrictions
- **Covid Transplant Registry:** reporting incidences and COVID cases map
- **COVID-19 Bulletins**
- Daily donor and transplant report
- Surveys
- COVID-19 sampling videos

Access BTS [here](#) for guidance on

- SARS-CoV-2 vaccination in adult solid organ and islet transplant wait-listed patients and adult living donor transplant recipients (as above)
- Recipient and living donor consent in the context of COVID-19*
- Management of transplant recipients with COVID-19*
- Resources for transplant trainees during COVID-19*
- Other resources, including
 - Webinars related to COVID-19
 - Access to Transplant Library for emerging evidence in COVID-19*

- COVID-19 related studies in progress

Recent publications (also access Transplant Library as above):

1. Results from the ERA-EDTA Registry indicate a high mortality due to COVID-19 in dialysis patients and kidney transplant recipients across Europe: [here](#)
2. COVID-19 Outcomes in Patients Waitlisted for Kidney Transplantation and Kidney Transplant Recipients. [here](#)
3. COVID-19 infections in kidney transplant recipients at the epicenter of pandemics: [here](#)
4. SARS-CoV-2 infection and early mortality of wait-listed and solid organ transplant recipients in England: a national cohort study, Ravanan R.; Callaghan C.; July 2020 [here](#)

OTHER ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

1. **NICE COVID 19 rapid guidelines:**
Arranging planned care in hospitals and diagnostic services at <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng179> (published 27th July)
Renal transplantation at <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/NG178> (updated August 2020)
2. **Government** latest information on COVID-19
<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
3. **Government** advice for health professionals
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance>
4. **BTS/CET-Transplant Library** (open access): Emerging evidence on Covid 19 in solid organ donation and transplantation at <https://bts.org.uk/information-resources/covid-19-information/>
5. **Human Tissue Authority (HTA)**
 - Guidance for transplant centres considering using different premises at <https://www.hta.gov.uk/policies/guidance-transplant-centres-considering-using-different-premises>.
 - Guidance on consent requirements for living donation in the context of COVID-19
 - For Independent Assessors: <https://www.hta.gov.uk/independent-assessors>
 - For Living Donor Coordinators: <https://www.hta.gov.uk/living-donor-coordinators>

RECIPIENTS OF SOLID ORGAN TRANSPLANTS

From evidence to date, solid organ transplant recipients are likely to be at greater risk from COVID-19.

Transplant patients are advised to [follow NHS advice](#)

- **Patients who suspect that they may have COVID-19** must contact NHS 111 [here](#).
- **Patients who have symptoms or contact with people who have tested positive for COVID-19** are advised to get a test but **not to** attend their GP, Emergency Department or transplant unit to reduce risk of spreading the virus and infecting others
- **If a patient is diagnosed with COVID-19**, it is recommended that the patient inform their transplant unit and they be monitored remotely during self-isolation. Any deterioration in condition should be referred back through NHS 111 for further evaluation
- Patients must be reminded not to stop their immunosuppression in the event of infection, unless recommended to do so by a transplant professional
- Patients returning from overseas must be managed in line with national advice, as above.
- **Patients diagnosed with or suspected of having COVID-19.** Recommended management in line with [above guidance](#)
- All cases must be reported to NHS BT [here](#) to ensure that they are captured in the COVID Registry

REDUCING THE RISK TO PATIENTS

National guidance on [general hygiene](#) and use of [personal protection equipment \(PPE\)](#) must be followed at all times

The advice includes, regular handwashing, alcohol gel use, avoidance of touching your face and maintaining a personal distance at all times.

- Patients must avoid contact with other people who are unwell
- Trusts are advised to avoid placing patients with respiratory symptoms in similar clinical areas to transplant recipients
- Transplant recipients are encouraged to follow Government guidance on clinically extremely vulnerable people and to discuss their individual situation with the clinical team if they need further advice
- Guidance is available for each of the UK countries at the following links
- England: [here.](#)
- Scotland: [here.](#)
- Wales: [here.](#)
- Northern Ireland: [here.](#)

- Specific advice for children and young people [here](#)
- Levels of immunosuppression should be reviewed but generalised immunosuppression reduction that may jeopardise organ function is not recommended
- Transplant units are advised to consider ways to limit hospital attendances for patients, such as:
 - rescheduling non urgent out-patient appointments
 - virtual or telemedicine appointments
 - home delivery of immunosuppression

ORGAN DONORS

- For latest guidance related to both living and deceased donation, refer to the information and guidance [here.](#)
- Potential living donors must be assessed in line with GOV.UK and NHS BT policy to evaluate their risk of having COVID-19 – [refer to guidance on consent](#)

ACUTE TRANSPLANTATION

Transplant units need to assess the risk of acute transplantation during a viral outbreak and refer to relevant NHSBT and BTS guidance (as above) to assess. Considerations include:

- Safety (recipients and living donor) in the context of local restrictions on capacity and capability and community prevalence of COVID-19
- Recipient factors and individual risk, including relative risk of other treatment options

REDUCING THE RISK TO STAFF

Staff are advised to follow latest advice and guidance and the recommended sources of NHS and Govt. information (above) to protect themselves and patients under their care.

Links to useful sources of information for recipients of solid organ transplants:

[Renal association](#)

[Kidney Care UK](#)

[Pregnancy and renal disease](#)

[British Liver Trust](#)

[British Association for the Study of the Liver](#)

[European Association for the Study of the Liver](#)

[International Society for Heart and Lung Transplantation](#)

[BTS/Transplant Library emerging evidence on COVID 19](#)

Information correct as of **22nd January 2021**. Please refer to the BTS website at www.bts.org.uk to ensure that you are using the latest update of this information