

Coronavirus: COVID-19 Information for transplant professionals 23rd Edition, 24th August 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 UPDATES

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](#)
- **Medical and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) guidance:** [here](#)
- **Organ donation and transplantation from patients with thrombosis and thrombocytopenia occurring after coronavirus vaccination** [here](#)
- **Latest BTS position statement on Vaccination against COVID-19 in Solid Organ and Islet Transplant Recipients (adults, children and young people)** [here](#)
- **Vaccination against COVID-19 FAQs for clinicians and patients** [here](#)
- **Pan-London Transplant Collaborative Ethics Group** Kidney transplantation and patients who decline SARS-CoV-2 vaccination [here](#)

Access NHSBT [here](#) for

- **Most recent guidance, including**
 - Vaccination against COVID-19
 - Organ donation and transplantation from patients with thrombosis and thrombocytopenia occurring after coronavirus vaccination
 - FAQs for clinicians and patients
 - OTDT/BTS guidance on SARS-CoV-2 vaccination in adult solid organ and islet transplant wait-listed patients and adult living donor transplant recipients Transplant centre re-opening and OTDT-BTS Guidance to Support Prioritisation of Adult and Paediatric Transplant Recipients in the Context of FSSA Recommendations
 - 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

- Vaccination resources (as above)
- OTDT-BTS Guidance to Support Prioritisation of Adult and Paediatric Transplant Recipients in the Context of FSSA Recommendations
- 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 see Vaccination section and access Transplant Library, as above):

1. **Three Doses of an mRNA Covid-19 Vaccine in Solid Organ Transplant Recipients**, Nassim Kamar et al. *N Engl J Med* 2021; 385:661-662, 12th August 2021 DOI:10.1056/NEJMc210886, <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMc2108861>
2. **Randomized Trial of a Third Dose of mRNA-1273 Vaccine in Transplant Recipients**, Victoria Hall et al. August 11, 2021 DOI: 10.1056/NEJMc2111462. <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMc2111462>
3. **Two Doses of SARS-CoV-2 Vaccines Reduce Risk of Death Due to COVID-19 in Solid Organ Transplant Recipients: Preliminary Outcomes From a UK Registry Linkage Analysis**, Ravanan, Rommel; Mumford, Lisa; Ushiro-Lumb, Ines; Callaghan, Chris; Pettigrew, Gavin; Thorburn, Douglas; Gardiner, Dale; Forsythe, John et al, July 23, 2021 https://journals.lww.com/transplantjournal/Citation/9000/Two_Doses_of_SARS_CoV_2_Vaccines_Reduce_Risk_of.95186.aspx
4. **Reduced humoral response to mRNA SARS-CoV-2 BNT162b2 vaccine in kidney transplant recipients without prior exposure to the virus**, Grupper A et al. *Am J Transplant.* 2021 Aug;21(8):2719-2726. doi: 10.1111/ajt.16615. Epub 2021 May 7. PMID: 33866672; PMCID: PMC8250589. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33866672/>
5. **Antibody response to 2-dose SARS-CoV-2 mRNA vaccine series in solid organ transplant recipients**, Boyarsky BJ, Werbel WA, Avery RK, et al. *JAMA* 2021;325:2204-2206. <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2779852>
6. **Safety and Immunogenicity of Anti-SARS-CoV-2 Messenger RNA Vaccines in Recipients of Solid Organ Transplants**, Marion O, Del Bello A, Abravanel F, et al. [published online ahead of print, 2021 May 25]. *Ann Intern Med.* 2021;M21-1341. doi:10.7326/M21-1341. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34029487/>
7. **Immunogenicity of a single dose of SARS-CoV-2 Messenger RNA vaccine in Solid Organ Transplant Recipients** Brian J. Boyarsky, MD¹; William A. Werbel, MD²; Robin K. Avery, MD²; Aaron A. R. Tobian, MD, PhD³; Allan B. Massie, PhD¹; Dorry L. Segev, MD, PhD¹; Jacqueline M. Garonzik-Wang, MD, PhD¹ *JAMA*. Published online March 15, 2021. <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2777685>

OTHER ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

1. **Federation of Surgical Speciality Associations (FSSA) Clinical Guide to Surgical Prioritisation During the Coronavirus Pandemic** https://fssa.org.uk/covid-19_documents.aspx
2. **NICE COVID 19 rapid guidelines:**
Arranging planned care in hospitals and diagnostic services at <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng179> (published 27th July 2020)
Renal transplantation at <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/NG178> (updated August 2020)
3. **Government** latest information on COVID-19
<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
4. **Government** advice for health professionals
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance>
5. **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/>
6. **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

The NHS recommends that vaccination is the best protection for everyone from severe disease, risk of hospitalisation and death due to COVID-19. It is recommended that transplant recipients accept the offer of vaccination and complete the full course to reduce their risk, but it is still possible to become infected with the virus, even when vaccinated.

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 (VACCINATED AND UNVACCINATED)

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 encouraged to accept the offer of vaccination against SARS-CoV-2 and to follow latest advice and guidance from recommended NHS and Govt. sources (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 **24th August 2021**. Please refer to the BTS website at www.bts.org.uk to ensure that you are using the latest update of this information