



University Hospitals Bristol
NHS Foundation Trust

Patient Information Service
Bristol Royal Hospital for Children

Endocarditis



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Endocarditis

Bacterial endocarditis is a serious infection that affects the lining of the heart known as the endocardium.

The infection is caused by germs getting into the bloodstream and settling on the heart. This can cause damage and can be a life-threatening situation.

Children with some congenital heart defects are at higher risk of this infection. Because of this increased risk, there are several things we advise:

- if your child experiences flu-like symptoms that last for more than a week, take them to your GP
- ensure your child has good dental hygiene and regular dental check ups
- inform your doctor if your child is to undergo invasive treatments or procedures
- ideally, your child should avoid ear or body piercing and tattoos. However, be extra vigilant for signs of infection if older children have already had these done. If you are concerned that ears or skin look infected, inform your GP.

Please note: Historically, antibiotics have been offered routinely as a preventative measure for patients at higher risk of endocarditis. However, there is little evidence to support this practice. For a discussion of this evidence see the full guidelines at: www.nice.org.uk/CG064.

Please remember these are only guidelines. If you are worried about your child, please contact:

- your local GP
- the cardiac nurse specialists

or

- ward 32 at Bristol Royal Hospital for Children, telephone **0117 342 8286** or **0117 342 8578**.

As well as providing clinical care, our Trust has an important role in research. This allows us to discover new and improved ways of treating patients.

While your child is under our care, you may be approached about them taking part in research. To find out more please visit: www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/research-innovation or call the research and innovation team on **0117 342 0233**.

For access to other patient leaflets and information please go to the following address:

www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/information-for-patients/

Hospital Switchboard: 0117 923 0000



Minicom: 0117 934 9869



www.uhbristol.nhs.uk



For an interpreter or signer please contact the telephone number on your appointment letter.



For this leaflet in large print, audio or PDF format, please email patientleaflets@uhbristol.nhs.uk.

