

Health chiefs issue warning as childhood respiratory infections rise ahead of winter

- Parents are being encouraged to look out for symptoms of severe infection in at-risk children, including a high temperature of 37.8°C or above (fever), a dry and persistent cough, difficulty feeding, rapid or noisy breathing (wheezing).
- The NHS is preparing for a rise in children needing treatment.
- Through the Respiratory DataMart surveillance system, positivity of samples tested for RSV has increased over the last 5 consecutive weeks and now stands at 8.9%.

Health chiefs in England are encouraging parents to be aware of the signs of respiratory illnesses in young children, as [data from Public Health England \(PHE\)](#) shows cases are starting to rise in parts of the country.

Respiratory illnesses, including colds and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) are very common in young children and we see them every year.

Last winter, due to the various restrictions in place to reduce the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19), there were far fewer infections in younger people. This means many will not have developed immunity and so we may see more cases this year than in a typical season. For the majority of children, these illnesses will not be serious and they will soon recover following rest and plenty of fluids.

RSV is a very common virus and almost all children are infected with it by the time they are 2 years old. In older children and adults, RSV may cause a cough or cold.

However, some children under 2, especially those born prematurely or with a heart condition, can suffer more serious consequences from these common infections such as [bronchiolitis](#), an inflammatory infection of the lower airways – which can make it hard to breathe.

The early symptoms of bronchiolitis are similar to those of a common cold but can develop over a few days into a high temperature of 37.8°C or above (fever), a dry and persistent cough, difficulty feeding, rapid or noisy breathing (wheezing).

Most cases of bronchiolitis are not serious and clear up within 2 to 3 weeks, but you should contact your GP or call NHS 111 if:

- you are worried about your child
- your child has taken less than half their usual amount during the last 2 or 3 feeds, or they have had a dry nappy for 12 hours or more
- your child has a persistent high temperature of 37.8C or above
- your child seems very tired or irritable

Dial 999 for an ambulance if:

- your baby is having difficulty breathing
- your baby's [tongue or lips are blue](#)
- there are long pauses in your baby's breathing

While still at low numbers, respiratory infections in young children are expected to rise this summer and as we go into the winter months.

Health Minister Lord Bethell said:

I remember the long nights in hospital when my 8 week old daughter fought off RSV. The image of her tiny body plugged into those machines and gasping for air will not leave me. I would not wish those moments for anyone.

I urge all parents and carers to be alert to the signs of RSV, particularly amongst young children. It's a nasty bug, so watch out for it.

Dr Yvonne Doyle, Medical Director at PHE, said:

This winter, we expect levels of common seasonal illnesses such as cold and flu to increase as people mix more and given that fewer people will have built up natural immunity during the pandemic.

Children under 2 are at a particular risk of severe infections from common seasonal illnesses. If a child under 2 is suffering from a cold, keep a close eye on their symptoms and make sure to contact your doctor if they get a high temperature, become breathless or have difficulty feeding.

It's important that we carry on with good hygiene habits that we've become used to during the pandemic, in order to protect ourselves and those around us. This means washing your hands regularly, using a tissue to catch coughs or sneezes and washing your hands afterwards, and staying away from others if you feel unwell.

Ruth May, Chief Nursing Officer for England, said:

For most children these illnesses won't be serious and they will soon bounce back but if you do need medical help for your child, especially if they are under 2, please do come forward for the care

you need.

The NHS has detailed plans in place for a wide range of scenarios ahead of winter and will continue to adapt them as needed, in line with the guidance from PHE.

NHS England began planning for the potential rise in paediatric respiratory infections in April 2021, with paediatric units bringing forward their usual winter planning, escalation and emergency processes which will support an increased capacity in terms of beds, workforce and ward supplies.

As part of NHS preparedness and in response to summer case detections by PHE surveillance, the offer of the preventative medicine palivizumab has been brought forward from the usual October start date and the number of doses has been extended from 5 to 7. It will also be offered to young children who are at the highest risk of complications from RSV, reducing the risk of hospitalisation in those most vulnerable.

This follows advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI).

PHE has also extended its surveillance system to ensure early signals of respiratory illnesses are being reported from a sample of NHS trusts. This usually ends in May and resumes in October, but will now continue into the summer months.

[Making Your Catch Count: Sea angling in the UK – be part of it](#)

Ever wanted to know how many people fish and what is caught in the sea? New research led by the Centre for Environment, Fisheries & Aquaculture Science (Cefas) and Substance has been released today, based on one of the biggest citizen science projects in fishing. The [report](#) provides estimates of the numbers of sea anglers, participation rates, and catches across the UK in 2018 and 2019.

This ongoing study is a very large citizen science project, where over 2,000 sea anglers from across the UK volunteered to provide data on their fishing trip locations and catches each year. Using a unique, free mobile app and online tool each individual diarist records their activity and demonstrates the importance that sea anglers place in supporting the conservation of fish stocks. Data collected is used by scientists to inform advice for the sustainable management of the UK's fisheries.

In the study, which is open for new participants online (www.seaangling.org),

diarists recorded over 8,500 fishing sessions and catches of over 70,000 fish of around 100 different species, making it a huge citizen science data collection exercise to reveal more about angling habits and catches.

In addition, 12,000 UK residents were surveyed, helping to develop a detailed picture of the UK's sea angling profile. This was combined with the data reported by sea anglers to estimate the numbers and tonnage of many different fish species retained and released each year.

This valuable information is being used to shape policy decisions to support sustainable fisheries and ensure the economic and recreational importance of sea angling is considered.

The findings showed:

- Between 551,000 and 758,000 of UK adults had been sea angling in each year, fishing for a total of around 6 million days each year.
- Estimates of numbers caught were produced for around 55 species and tonnages for about 40 species. This resulted in total catches of 46 and 43 million fish.
- The vast majority of fish were released – around 80% of all catches, demonstrating that conservation is becoming more of a feature of sea angling.
- Catch composition was similar between years with mackerel, whiting, lesser spotted dogfish, and sea bass caught most commonly.
- Catches were slightly lower than 2016-17 using the same survey approach, although release rates and catch composition were similar.
- Analysis included two approaches to assess the robustness of the survey and this work is continuing with 2020 data as we speak.

Kieran Hyder, Project Lead from Cefas, said:

When combined with data from 2016-17, we are starting to build a time series that will help to understand changes in participation, catches, and expenditure over time, and the ecological, social, and economic impacts that it generates over time. These data will provide a treasure trove of information to help to understand sea angling in the UK, and ensure that the needs of sea anglers are considered in marine policy and management.

Adam Brown, Head of Research at Substance said:

We cannot thank the diarists enough for their commitment and support, without which this approach would not have been possible. Using the app and tool that Substance's technical team developed, this makes a great contribution to the sustainable management of marine fisheries.

You can sign up

The Sea Angling Diary Project is continuing in 2021 and it is open to anyone who fishes in the sea in the UK to join. Sea anglers get a free mobile app, catch recording kit, and online dashboard and reports of their activity. Anglers can sign up at www.seaangling.org.

Additional information

Sea angling is a popular activity in the UK that has social and economic benefits, and catches can be significant. Data on participation, catch and economic value of sea angling are needed by government and stakeholders to support well-informed decisions and sustainable management of fisheries.

To obtain these estimates, the outputs from two separate survey methods were combined: 1. A survey of 12,000 UK residents was used to estimate how many people went recreational sea fishing, and the number of days they fished from the shore or from different types of boats. 2. A nationwide panel of sea anglers completed a diary of activities, catches and spend during the years. Volunteer anglers were provided with a free mobile app and online tool to record their activity. Data were provided by around 1,000 anglers catching 122,000 fish in 11,000 sessions over the two years.

The outputs from these two surveys were combined to estimate total UK catches, after correcting for differences in frequency of fishing (avidity), age, and type of fishing (shore, boat) between the diary sample and the UK sea angling population.

The study was led by Centre for Environment, fisheries & Aquaculture Science (Cefas) in collaboration with the research and technology company Substance. It was funded by Department for the Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra), Welsh Government, Marine Scotland, and Agri-food and Biosciences Institute of Northern Ireland (afbi) with support from the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF). This satisfies UK statutory requirements to provide sea angling catch estimates under the Data Collection Framework for Common Fisheries Policy and charter boat catches under the Control Regulation.

The project was supported by many parts of the sea angling community including the Scottish Federation of Sea Anglers, Welsh Federation of Sea Anglers, Irish Federation of Sea Anglers, Angling Trades Association, and BritishSeaFishing.co.uk. Support has been provided by Fishing Megastore.

Thanks to the thousands of individual sea anglers that have contributed to the diary programme since 2016 providing data and engaging with a wide range of surveys during this period.

For further information, please contact Kieran Hyder, kieran.hyder@cefas.co.uk and Adam Brown adam.brown@substance.net.

Government funds biggest ever overseas Team GB

- Sports Minister talks of national “pride and excitement” as Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games begins today
- Team GB benefiting from £342 million of funding since Rio 2016
- 376 athletes from England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales unite as biggest ever overseas Olympic team dispatched to Tokyo

Sports Minister Nigel Huddleston and Olympic legend Dame Katharine Grainger have expressed the nation’s “pride and excitement” in the prospects for Team GB, ahead of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games officially launching today.

The team, which includes 272 athletes from England, 52 from Scotland, 29 from Wales and six from Northern Ireland, have benefited from a funding package of £342 million for our Olympians and Paralympians since the Rio 2016 Games, thanks to the Government and National Lottery players. This has been channelled through UK Sport, of which Dame Katharine is its Chair.

With the challenges of disrupted training schedules, lockdowns and additional safety measures, this funding, coupled with hard work and extreme dedication, has enabled 376 Team GB athletes to reach their full potential ahead of these extraordinary games – making it the biggest Team GB at an overseas games.

It will also be the first summer Olympic Games to have more female athletes than male. 201 female athletes and 175 male athletes will be competing across 26 sports.

Ahead of travelling to Tokyo for a few days later this month, Nigel Huddleston recently visited some of the Team GB athletes at Bisham Abbey training camp, and witnessed how hard they have worked and the sacrifices they have made, in order to prepare and be in peak condition at exactly the right time.

Sport Minister Nigel Huddleston said:

Our Olympic and Paralympic athletes are an absolute credit to the United Kingdom. I’m in awe of their commitment and the sacrifices they’ve made leading up to Tokyo 2020.

Throughout these challenging times, we’ve remained committed to Team GB and supporting the athletes to reach their full potential. I’m extremely confident that our athletes will create extraordinary moments, lift the nation’s mood and inspire millions of people to get active and take up new sports as we continue to recover from the pandemic back home.

It's an honour to be travelling to Tokyo for the competition, and I know the whole nation will unite in feeling immense pride, excitement and is wishing Team GB and Paralympics GB the very best of luck.

Dame Katherine Grainger, Chair, UK Sport, said:

The pride that we feel in the efforts made by UK athletes to make their dreams come true is profound and unshakeable. However, that pride has never been more heartfelt than it is as we look forward to Tokyo.

I am confident the world will witness a celebration of sporting excellence that delivers a much-needed boost to people everywhere. I am also confident that, while these Games take place in unique circumstances, our athletes will deliver many extraordinary moments and performances for the British public to enjoy. We know how much their endeavours mean to sports fans – and how they can be a beacon of hope to inspire and reconnect us all after such a difficult year.

We must never forget that none of this would be possible without the support of the Government and National Lottery players over the last quarter of a century.

First-time Olympic athletes have not been deterred by the unusual circumstances, with almost 70% of the team making their Olympic and Paralympic debut in Tokyo.

Recent research published by UK Sport has revealed that more than three quarters of the UK will follow the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, engaging in their favourite sporting events, which will help inspire millions across the nation to get more active as we emerge from the pandemic.

ENDS

Supporting the stability and security of Bosnia and Herzegovina through the Office of the High Representative

Thank you, Madam President.

The UK has abstained on this resolution today to show our support for the

Office of the High Representative, and to reject attempts to limit its powers, or end the role of the High Representative prematurely.

It remains the case that a resolution or other Security Council product is not, and has never been, a legal requirement for the appointment of the new High Representative, Mr Christian Schmidt. Mr Schmidt was successfully appointed by the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board on 27 May, and will take up his role on 1 August regardless of action taken, or not taken, by the Security Council.

Nevertheless, we have made clear that we have no objection to and could support a resolution or letter from the Security Council welcoming the appointment, in accordance with the Council's previous practice.

But we cannot accept a resolution which seeks premature closure of the High Representative's Office, termination of his executive powers, and imposes an artificial time limit on Council support for Mr Schmidt's appointment.

These proposals go beyond the previous practice of the Security Council and encroach upon matters that are the responsibility of the Peace Implementation Council. They are inconsistent with the 5+2 criteria set by the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board for closure of the Office of the High Representative, which to date have unfortunately not yet been met. And they are inconsistent with the Security Council's endorsement of the 5+2 criteria, reiterated in recent statements by many Council members and in resolution 2549 unanimously adopted last year.

The focus of the Security Council should remain on supporting the stability and security of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Office of the High Representative remains vital in overseeing the civilian aspects of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina – the "Dayton Agreement". For the Council to unilaterally renege on its longstanding commitment to the 5+2 criteria would undermine that Agreement and set a dangerous precedent for our work.

This resolution has failed not because of a lack of support for the Office of the High Representative, but because of the Council's enduring support for the High Representative's role and relevance, until such time as Bosnia and Herzegovina has met the required conditions for closure.

Thank you, Madam President.

[Hammersmith Bridge Taskforce meeting, 20 July 2021](#)

News story

Joint statement on progress made by the taskforce at its meeting on 20 July 2021.



The latest meeting of the Hammersmith Bridge Taskforce was held on 20 July 2021.

It was chaired by Transport Minister, Baroness Vere. Attendees included the Project Director Dana Skelley, along with representatives from the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (LBHF), the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, the Greater London Authority, Transport for London (TfL) and the Port of London Authority.

Dana Skelley, speaking on behalf of the Hammersmith Bridge Taskforce, said:

At yesterday's meeting, the Taskforce discussed the positive development that Hammersmith Bridge reopened to pedestrians, cyclists and river traffic on 17 July 2021. This represents welcome progress, delivering benefits to local people.

The Taskforce is keen to maintain momentum. LBHF is working, with support from DFT, on producing a [business case](#) on the preferred engineering solution so the bridge can be reopened permanently to pedestrians, cyclists and river traffic and eventually to motorists. Also, LBHF has sought an expert engineering opinion on the repair options for stabilisation and strengthening the bridge and confirmed it would share the preferred stabilisation option with the Taskforce members next week.

The Taskforce noted that the department had shared the first draft of the Memorandum of Understanding on funding with LBHF. The MOU and the completion of investigative works to inform the consideration of a temporary reopening were conditions of the extraordinary funding and finance deal with TfL on 1 June.

Published 22 July 2021