



**University Hospitals  
Bristol and Weston**  
NHS Foundation Trust

Patient Information Service  
**Bristol Royal Hospital for Children**

# Endocarditis



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

- your local GP
- the cardiac nurse specialists on **0117 342 8286**

or

- Dolphin ward at Bristol Royal Hospital for Children, telephone **0117 342 8332**.

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 under our care, you may be invited to take part in research. To find out more please visit: [www.uhbw.nhs.uk](http://www.uhbw.nhs.uk)

Help us prevent the spread of infection in hospital. Please make sure your hands are clean. Wash and dry them thoroughly/use the gel provided. If you have been unwell in the last 48 hours please consider whether your visit is essential.

Smoking is the primary cause of preventable illness and premature death. For support in stopping smoking contact **NHS Smokefree on 0300 123 1044.**

Drinkline is the national alcohol helpline. If you're worried about your own or someone else's drinking, you can call this free helpline in complete confidence. **Drinkline on 0300 123 1110.**

For access all patient leaflets and information please go to the following address:  
<http://foi.avon.nhs.uk/>

**Bristol switchboard: 0117 923 0000**  
**Weston switchboard: 01934 636 363**  
**[www.uhbw.nhs.uk](http://www.uhbw.nhs.uk)**



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



For this leaflet in large print or PDF format, please email [patientleaflets@uhbw.nhs.uk](mailto:patientleaflets@uhbw.nhs.uk).

