

Clinical Guidelines for Chest Imaging in a Child with Respiratory Illness during COVID-19

The following recommendations are provided by senior Radiology and Emergency clinicians from Queensland Children's Hospital regarding chest imaging in a child with respiratory illness during COVID-19.

Consider **chest x ray** (single frontal projection) for patients with **any one of the following**:

- Increased work of breathing
- Persistent tachypnoea
- SpO₂ <92% on room air
- Temperature > 39°C and white cell count >20

Note that underlying co-infection may be more common in paediatric patients [2]

Position Statement:

- CT is not recommended for screening or as a first-line test to diagnose COVID-19 [2, 3, 4]
- Viral testing remains the only specific method to confirm diagnosis [1]
- A subsequent CT would only be considered to guide management in patients suspected of having complicating features such as abscess or empyema [5].

These positions are in agreement with those published by RANZCR, ACR, and BSTI [5, 6, 7]

The unwell or febrile patient should continue to be managed as per recommendations in the febrile illness and sepsis guidelines.

Related resources

- [CHQ Flowchart: Febrile illness - Emergency management in children <3months](#)
- [CHQ Flowchart: Febrile illness - Emergency management in children >3months](#)
- [CHQ Flowchart: Sepsis - Emergency management in children](#)



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References

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