

# Working together for families affected by **Kawasaki Disease**

Shared Statement 7 May 2020

This is a combined statement from a number of organisations for Kawasaki Disease around the world. All our communities have been affected by the recent, worrying press reports. Our Kawasaki Disease networks are collaborating on a global scale and we share our solidarity in providing consistent information to you as we all work together to support those affected by Kawasaki Disease at this difficult time.

In the past few days, following media reporting, we have received a lot of questions on any possible link between COVID-19 and Kawasaki Disease. We understand the concerns and anxiety of families with a history of Kawasaki Disease. We are constantly in contact with expert doctors and we will share with you all the reliable and factual information we gather from them. **Rari ma Speciali, Kawasaki Disease Italy**

Regarding children previously diagnosed with Kawasaki Disease, to date, the available information does not seem to indicate that these children are at greater risk of contracting COVID-19 or have a different response to COVID-19 (if any) than other children. **Kawasaki Disease Canada**

Fewer cases of Kawasaki Disease than would be normally expected at this time of year are currently being seen – not more. It is vital however that both during this pandemic and in the future, that the medical community and parents are actively aware of the symptoms of Kawasaki Disease. The single defining characteristic is a distinctively persistent high fever. Other symptoms can include a rash, cracked lips and sore mouth, bloodshot eyes, and swollen glands in the neck – often just on one side. **Societi, the UK Foundation for Kawasaki Disease**

“All the information we have so far shows that, overall, COVID-19 affects a very small number of children, and in Spain any suspicion of a slight or moderate increase in cases that suggest Kawasaki Disease is currently being studied by expert doctors.” **Asenkawa, Asociación Enfermedad de Kawasaki Spain**

We understand that the attention on Kawasaki Disease globally raises many emotions and questions. We are hopeful that attempts in all our countries to flattening the COVID-19 curve will minimise risk and things continue to move in a positive direction. Our focus is on supporting our communities, whilst knowing that the more people hear about Kawasaki Disease, more awareness is being raised and with this, perhaps further research possibilities. Together we are stepping closer to the answer! **Kawasaki Disease Foundation Australia**

The expert doctors advising our organisations have been **consistent** in their guidance to us and this is what they say:

“At the moment there is no proven link and no increase in new Kawasaki Disease cases. The level of attention of all the scientific community is at a maximum level and we are monitoring all possible unusual manifestation of disease in children. There is a group of scientists and physicians analyzing all cases.”

**Prof Alberto Villani, Italy - Rari ma Speciali, Kawasaki Disease Italy**

“Some of the symptoms associated with Kawasaki Disease may also be the same as those associated with COVID-19 infection. However, symptomatic and complicated COVID-19 infection remains rare in children compared to adults according to the European experience. The trend so far is similar in Canada.”

**Dr Nagib Dahdah, Dr Brian W McCrindle - Kawasaki Disease Canada**

“Kawasaki Disease is an increasingly common inflammatory disorder, and whilst no infection has ever been proven to be the sole trigger, the scientific community believes that any one of many infections may trigger Kawasaki Disease in susceptible children. For the majority of cases, Kawasaki Disease occurs without ever identifying any infectious cause.”

**Prof Robert Tulloh - Societi, the UK Kawasaki Disease Foundation**

“There is no current indication that overall rates of newly diagnosed Kawasaki Disease (without shock) are increasing with the pandemic, nor that children who have previously had Kawasaki Disease are at increased risk of more severe COVID-19 infection.”

**Dr David Burgner - Kawasaki Disease Foundation Australia**

“If a child has presence of prolonged fever, rash or is generally unwell, the recommendation is that parents and caregivers should consult their paediatricians, specialists who know the disease.”

**Dr Jordi Antón - Asenkawa, Asociación Enfermedad de Kawasaki Spain**

**Unwell children need medical care:**

**Together, we urge parents/caregivers to seek medical advice if you are worried about your child for whatever reason. Contact your usual doctor or online / telephone medical advice line. If you need urgent advice, call your country's emergency number and if a professional tells you to go to the hospital, please do so.**

For more information, your national Kawasaki Disease organisation website can be found by clicking their logo below.

