The SIMGePeD (Italian Society for Pediatric Genetic Diseases and Congenital Disabilities) published the below text intended for children with rare conditions and disabilities. As we know, so far it seems that children are less affected, mainly in regards to the more serious symptoms of the infection. Having said that, however, it is highly recommended NOT TO lower the level of attention. These children are to protected as much and even more than the others given there overall and general fragility.

**Document on coronavirus and children with disabilities of 12.03.2020**

Although the few literature data on COVID-19 disease caused by coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 in paediatric age are relatively reassuring to date, this information is still insufficient and unsubstantiated to draw definitive conclusions.

The latest ministerial directives identify people with complex chronic conditions as an increased risk population. In keeping with this indication, we therefore believe that children with neuromotor disabilities, chronic pneumopathies, heart disease, immune deficits, hereditary metabolic diseases, at risk of acute heart failure or people using a pacemaker, are to be considered populations at an increased risk.

In Western countries and in Italy in particular, children with disabilities or complex chronic conditions constitute a significant population, both in terms of prevalence and in terms of the increased need for care. We therefore believe that the precautionary measures and indications currently given for the adult risk patients are definitely also to be applied for these 'fragile children'. We therefore recommend that family members and other caregivers take special care in adopting prudent behaviors, aimed at reducing the risk of COVID-19 infection:

 • take the child out of their home to meet other people only in case of strict need. You can stay in open spaces like gardens avoiding contact with other people.

 • prevent the child from frequenting crowded places where it is not possible to maintain the interpersonal safe distance of at least one meter;

 • carefully comply with ministerial guidelines, with particular reference to hand washing, contact precautions, proper use of masks and disinfection of environments;

 • avoid contact with people who may exhibit only modest respiratory symptoms;

 • reduce access to health services for all non-essential services and visits (with the exception of acute conditions, therapeutic visits for treatment stabilisation, risk of immediate complications, or feeling ill even if only presumed);

 • request an evaluation by your treating physician in case of respiratory symptoms;

 • be highly suspicious in case of a new onset of acute respiratory symptoms by having the coronavirus swab performed where necessary.

SIMGePeD - Italian Society for Pediatric Genetic Diseases and Congenital Disabilities.

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