

# NHS Kent & Medway Medicines Optimisation Team

## NICE News Bimonthly – December 2023

### FOR INFORMATION

#### NICE Publications

##### NICE clinical guidelines

##### [Stroke rehabilitation in adults published in October 2023](#)

This guideline covers rehabilitation after stroke for over 16s. It aims to ensure people are assessed for common problems and conditions linked to stroke, and get the care and therapy they need. It includes recommendations on the organisation and delivery of rehabilitation in hospital and the community.

#### Updated NICE Clinical Guidelines

##### [Thyroid disease: assessment and management Updated October 2023](#)

This guideline covers investigating all suspected thyroid disease and managing primary thyroid disease (related to the thyroid rather than the pituitary gland). It does not cover managing thyroid cancer or thyroid disease in pregnancy. It aims to improve quality of life by making recommendations on diagnosis, treatment, long-term care and support. NICE has also produced a [guideline on thyroid cancer](#).

In **October 2023**, NICE updated recommendations on [investigating suspected thyroid dysfunction](#) to highlight the potential for biotin in dietary supplements to affect the results of thyroid function tests.

##### [Jaundice in newborn babies under 28 days Updated October 2023](#)

This guideline covers diagnosing and treating jaundice, which is caused by increased levels of bilirubin in the blood, in newborn babies (neonates). It aims to help detect or prevent very high levels of bilirubin, which can be harmful if not treated.

In **October 2023**, NICE updated recommendations on [looking for jaundice](#) to highlight that skin pigmentation changes may be harder to see in darker skin and [managing prolonged jaundice](#) to advise that urine culture should only be considered if there is clinical suspicion of urinary tract infection. For more information, see the [October 2023 surveillance report](#).

##### [Pneumonia in adults: diagnosis and management Updated October 2023](#)

This guideline was developed before the COVID-19 pandemic. It covers diagnosing and managing pneumonia in adults who do not have COVID-19. It aims to improve accurate assessment and diagnosis of pneumonia to help guide antibiotic prescribing and ensure that people receive the right treatment.

In **October 2023**, NICE replaced the recommendation on lower respiratory tract infection with a link to [NICE's guideline on suspected acute respiratory infection in over 16s](#) (ARI). NICE updated the [recommendations on severity assessment outside hospital](#) in line with the ARI guideline.

For recommendations on managing suspected or confirmed pneumonia in adults with COVID-19, see [NICE's guideline on managing COVID-19](#).

For recommendations on antibiotic treatment, see [NICE's guidelines on pneumonia \(community-acquired\): antimicrobial prescribing](#) and [pneumonia \(hospital-acquired\): antimicrobial prescribing](#).

##### [Familial breast cancer: classification, care and managing breast cancer and related risks in people with a family history of breast cancer Updated November 2023](#)

This guideline covers care for people with a family history of breast, ovarian or another related (prostate or pancreatic) cancer. It aims to improve the long-term health of these families by describing strategies to reduce the

risk of and promote early detection of breast cancer (including genetic testing and mammography). It also includes advice on treatments (tamoxifen, raloxifene) and surgery (mastectomy).

NICE has also produced a guideline on some of the tests and treatments for [early and locally advanced breast cancer](#). In **November 2023**, NICE removed the off-label warning for anastrozole in recommendations on chemoprevention for women at moderate or high risk of breast cancer, in line with the MHRA licence variation.

### [Suspected acute respiratory infection in over 16s: assessment at first presentation and initial management](#)

#### [Updated November 2023](#)

This guideline covers assessment of people aged 16 and over with symptoms and signs of acute respiratory infection (bacterial or viral) at first remote or in-person contact with NHS services. It also covers the initial management of any infections. It aims to support healthcare practitioners in making sure that people's treatment follows the best care pathway. It forms part of a suite of work on [virtual wards](#) being undertaken by NICE.

This guideline should be read alongside NICE's antimicrobial prescribing guidelines on:

- [acute cough](#)
- [acute exacerbation of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease](#)
- [acute sinusitis](#)
- [acute sore throat](#).

In **November 2023**, NICE amended guidance to clarify that the threshold for treatment or referral for further assessment may be lower for people with an acute respiratory infection who are more likely to have a poor outcome.

### [Hypertension in adults: diagnosis and management Updated November 2023](#)

This guideline covers identifying and treating primary hypertension (high blood pressure) in people aged 18 and over, including people with type 2 diabetes. It aims to reduce the risk of cardiovascular problems such as heart attacks and strokes by helping healthcare professionals to diagnose hypertension accurately and treat it effectively.

NICE has also produced a [guideline on hypertension in pregnancy](#).

In **November 2023**, NICE updated guidance on measuring and managing postural hypotension. NICE also added tables to the section on monitoring treatment and blood pressure targets to summarise blood pressure targets in this guideline and guidelines on type 1 diabetes and chronic kidney disease. See [update information](#) for further details.

### [Transient loss of consciousness \('blackouts'\) in over 16s Updated November 2023](#)

This guideline covers assessment, diagnosis and referral for people over 16 who have had a transient loss of consciousness (TLoC; also called a blackout). It aims to improve care for people with TLoC by specifying the most effective assessments and recommending when to refer to a specialist.

In **November 2023**, NICE amended guidance on assessment and referral for suspected postural hypotension.

See [update information](#) for further details.

### [COVID-19 rapid guideline: managing COVID-19 Updated November 2023](#)

This guideline covers the management of COVID-19 for babies, children, young people and adults in all care settings. NICE are continually monitoring the evidence and updating the guideline as new information emerges.

On **30 November 2023** NICE:

- replaced two recommendations on managing acute cough with a link to the [NICE guideline on cough \(acute\): antimicrobial prescribing](#)
- removed the recommendation to consider benzodiazepine for managing anxiety or agitation
- removed the recommendations on medicines for end of life care.

For more details see the [update information](#).

### [Acne vulgaris: management Updated December 2023](#)

This guideline covers management of acne vulgaris in primary and specialist care. It includes advice on topical and oral treatments (including antibiotics and retinoids), treatment using physical modalities, and the impact of acne vulgaris on mental health and wellbeing.

In **December 2023**, NICE clarified [recommendations on oral isotretinoin treatment](#) in line with the [2023 MHRA advice on the introduction of new safety measures](#). See the [update information](#) for more details.