

# Impact of Covid-19 on children with rheumatological disease in Ireland

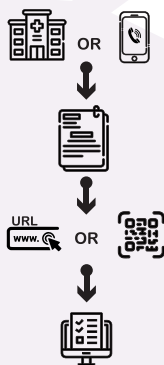
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## Introduction

- Covid-19 virus spread rapidly and became a global pandemic.
- Children tend to have a milder form of the disease than adults.
- People who are immunocompromised are at higher risk of serious illness if they become infected.
- Aim : describe how Covid-19 has affected paediatric rheumatology patients since the pandemic began in Ireland.

## Method

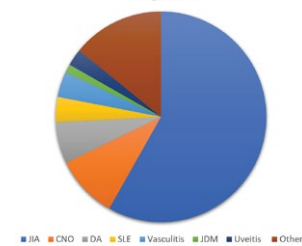
- A single center cross sectional study.
- The survey included 19 primary questions, some of which led to additional inquiries based on participant responses.
- The participants could access the online survey between August and December 2022.



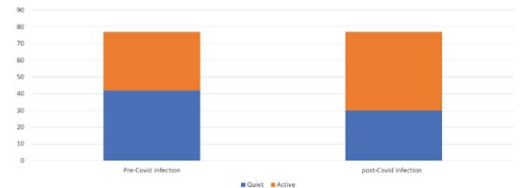
## Result

- 77 participants
- 15% experienced two infections, and one participant experienced three infections.
- Most common method for diagnosing Covid-19 infection (50.7%) was antigen testing, with PCR confirmation in 26% of cases, and 23% of individuals had positive results with both tests.
- Diarrhoea was the least-reported symptom of infection at 6%, while fatigue was the most reported symptom at 66%.
- Interestingly, one patient reported hearing loss during infection.
- 68.7% withheld their medication during the infection episode, and 55.5% contacted our team when they did.
- 12.7% of participants required general practitioner or hospital visits at the time of infection.
- Hospital admissions were necessary for four patients, but none required oxygen therapy or intensive care.

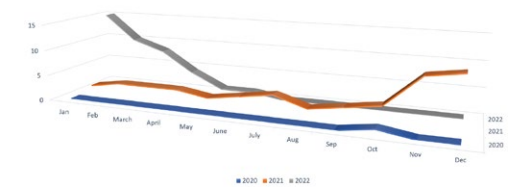
Diagnosis



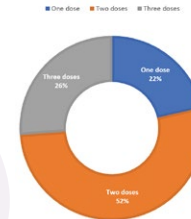
Disease status



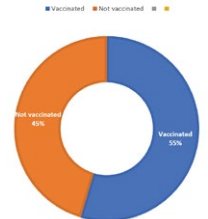
Date of infection



VACCINE DOSES



VACCINE UPTAKE



## Conclusion

- Despite being on immunosuppression therapy, Covid-19 infection did not result in fatal disease in paediatric rheumatology patients, as earlier studies had reported.
- Due to lockdown constraints and masking, it seems that most patients acquired their infection later in the pandemic, rather than at the beginning the pandemic.
- There was a high rate of vaccine uptake in this cohort – half of the participants were vaccinated before infection – which may have contributed to mild infections.

