

Recommendations for Patients with Asthma Regarding COVID-19

This novel virus is being intensely studied, and while evidence is limited, the CDC has recently included patients with moderate to severe persistent asthma as having additional risk from COVID-19:

"People with moderate to severe asthma may be at higher risk of getting very sick from COVID-19. COVID-19 can affect your respiratory tract (nose, throat, lungs), cause an asthma attack, and possibly lead to pneumonia and acute respiratory disease."



We recommend staying informed and following the current federal, state, and local guidelines regarding COVID-19. Below are some of the current guidelines.

Prepare for COVID-19

- Make sure that you have adequate refills of all medications.
- Take everyday precautions to keep space between yourself and others.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Limit time in public, stay away from others that are sick.
- Wear a mask if 2-years-old and above.
- Masks should cover the nose, mouth and fit snugly against the side of the face.
- Avoid crowds or non-essential travel.
- Practice social distancing with at least six feet of space between others.
- Stay home as much as possible to reduce further your risk of being exposed.
- Avoid poorly ventilated indoor spaces.
- If someone in your home is sick, have them separate from others and stay in a specific "sick room" or area and use separate bathroom (if available). Household members over 2 years of age should wear a mask around others until the case is resolved.
- Avoid sharing personal household items such as cups and towels.



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Follow Your Asthma Action Plan

- Keep your asthma under control by following your [asthma action plan](#).
- Continue your current medications, including controller medications, such as inhaled corticosteroids.
- There is no data at this time that would support changing standard asthma therapeutic measures, including systemic corticosteroids, in individuals with asthma and a COVID-19 infection.
- Patients with asthma should continue to take their controller medications and keep their asthma under control because if they stop the medications, they could have an asthma flare, and potentially have to be seen in the emergency department where exposure to COVID-19 could be high.
- Don't stop any medications (including steroids) or change your asthma treatment plan without talking to your healthcare provider.
- Discuss any concerns about your treatment or immunizations with your health care provider.
- Make sure that you have at least 30 days of non-prescription medications. Talk to your physician and pharmacist to ensure you have an adequate supply and necessary refills of prescription medications, and asthma care supplies (inhalers, AeroChamber®, nebulizer and nebulizer kits, etc.) in case you need to stay home for a long time.
- Avoid your asthma triggers.
- Know how to use your inhaler or other controller and rescue medications.
- Remember to take all of your asthma and allergy medications as prescribed. This includes oral allergy medications and nasal sprays as we enter spring pollen season.
- Clean and maintain asthma equipment, such as face masks, mouthpieces and/or nebulizer parts as directed by the manufacturer. You should not share inhalers, spacers and asthma equipment with others.

What If I am Exposed to COVID Through a Sick Contact?

- Contact your health care provider immediately.
- If you have trouble breathing, you should obtain medical attention immediately.
- If you have persistent chest pain or pressure, you should obtain medical attention immediately.
- If you or your child is difficult to arouse or confused, you should immediately obtain medical attention.
- If you or your child has bluish lips, face or fingernails, you should obtain medical attention immediately.
- You can always reach us 24 hours a day by calling the hospital and asking to speak to the physician on-call for pulmonary/allergy. Call **(562) 933-KIDS (5437)**.

Clean and Disinfect Things You or Your Family Touch Frequently

- If possible, have someone who doesn't have asthma do the cleaning and disinfecting. When they use cleaning and disinfecting products, have them:
 - Make sure that people with asthma are not in the room.
 - Minimize the use of disinfectants that can cause an asthma attack.
 - Open windows or doors and use a fan that blows air outdoors.
 - Clean and disinfect surfaces like phones, remotes, tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, keyboards, toilets, faucets and sinks daily.
 - Always follow the instructions on the product label.
 - Spray or pour spray products onto a cleaning cloth or paper towel instead of spraying the product directly onto the cleaning surface (if the product label allows).
 - The [EPA](#) provides recommendations for using disinfectants in a household with family members who have asthma or other chronic respiratory diseases.

Following your asthma action plan remains paramount for our patients with asthma who experience increase in asthma symptoms or having acute exacerbation including seeking emergency medical care or calling 911 in the event of a life-threatening exacerbation.

Secondly, to patients with asthma who are concerned for symptoms or illness related to COVID-19, go directly to the CDC for COVID-19 What To Do If you Are Sick:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/need-to-know.html#if-sick>

Severe-Persistent Asthma

Patient with severe asthma should follow the above information, as well as the following suggestions:

- Patients with severe asthma who are prescribed and receiving biologic therapies, such as Dupixent® (Dupilumab), Xolair® (Omalizumab), Nucala® (Mepolizumab), or Fasena® (Benralizumab), should continue these therapies without interruption.
- Contact your provider if barriers to care are experienced, reactions occur, or if there are interruptions to these biologic asthma controller medications due to COVID-19 illness or for other reasons.

Resources

- The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, "COVID-19: What People With Asthma Need to Know" <https://community.aafa.org/blog/coronavirus-2019-ncov-flu-what-people-with-asthma-need-to-know>.
- American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology, "Answers to your questions on Asthma" https://education.aaaai.org/asthma-qa_COVID-19.
- Should you need additional guidance including an in-person or video/telehealth visit, call us at **(562) 933-8749**.