

COVID-19

Q&A ON COVID-19 AND NCDS

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IF I HAVE ASTHMA, WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT COVID-19?

1 ARE PEOPLE WITH ASTHMA MORE SERIOUSLY AFFECTED BY COVID-19?

- People with moderate or severe asthma are more likely to develop severe COVID-19. This is because the coronavirus affects the lungs.

2 IF I HAVE ASTHMA, WHAT SHOULD I DO TO AVOID GETTING COVID-19?

- Wash your hands frequently, always avoid touching your face.
- Stay away from anyone who you know is sick.
- Ask family and friends who are sick or could be sick to kindly avoid visiting you.
- Always stay at least 3 feet (1 meter) apart from any other person when you are outside of the house.
- Minimize, and if possible, completely avoid, going to places with large crowds – this includes the stores, supermarkets, and pharmacies. When possible, ask a friend or relative who is healthy to purchase necessary items for you.
- Wear a face mask for protection if you must leave home to go to crowded areas.



3 HOW CAN I PREPARE MYSELF AND MY FAMILY DURING THIS PANDEMIC?

- Planning for essentials like food, water and medicines is critical.
- Ensure that you have an adequate supply of all your medications, at least a 90-day supply, on hand.
- Ensure an adequate supply of healthy food choices.
- Be physically active every day.
- Have cleaning supplies in your home (soap, disinfectants, hand sanitizer).
- Keep your asthma under control. Follow your asthma action plan if you have one. Most important is to take your controller medication/inhaler regularly while you feel well. This is the medication/inhaler you take daily to prevent you from getting an asthma attack.
- Avoid your asthma triggers. these can include tobacco smoke, pets/animals, mold, or pollution.
- Make sure you are using your asthma inhaler properly: https://www.cdc.gov/asthma/inhaler_video/default.htm

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- Have your doctor's phone number handy, somewhere you and your family members can find it easily. Other phone numbers that may be helpful to have on hand are: pharmacy, medical specialists, insurance provider.

4 WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I FEEL ILL?

- You should call your doctor right away.
- Do not be afraid to seek care if you are not well. Most hospitals and clinics have set up ways of protecting people coming in from getting infected by the coronavirus. It is important to get help if you are sick.
- Symptoms of COVID-19 include: cough, difficulty breathing, fever, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell. If you develop any of these symptoms call your doctor right away.
- Some of the coronavirus symptoms are similar to those of an asthma attack. Follow your asthma action plan – start using your rescue inhaler as directed. Then call your doctor right away.

5 SHOULD I STILL GO TO THE DOCTOR FOR REGULARLY SCHEDULED VISITS?

- It is important to keep your regularly scheduled doctor visits.
- Many clinics have established ways to talk to the doctor on the phone without having to physically go to the clinic. This keeps you safe by keeping you away from places where you could be exposed to the coronavirus. Be sure to stay in touch with your doctor.

6 IS THERE ANYTHING I SHOULD KNOW ABOUT MY MEDICATIONS WITH THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC?

- Do not start or stop any medication without first talking to your doctor.

- The most important thing is to take your medications regularly as prescribed.
- At this time there is no evidence that any medications should be stopped if you develop COVID-19.



7 WHAT CAN I DO IF I AM FEELING STRESSED OR ANXIOUS?

- These are trying times that can be very stressful. Many individuals with chronic disease already have a lot on their mind and may have underlying depression and/or anxiety. The COVID-19 pandemic can make things more difficult. Know that you are not alone.
- Be sure to find ways of taking a break from coronavirus news, this provides you with the space to think about your wellbeing.
- Stay connected to friends and family. Call friends and family members regularly to maintain social connectedness.
- Find things that help you relax, such as reading, listening to music, or walking.
- If things become too much, if you experience a great deal of anxiety or depression, be sure to reach out for help: call your friend or family member or call your physician.

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