

Important COVID-19 information for those with asthma and/or allergies

Recommendations from the American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology

As COVID-19 continues to spread throughout the United States and the world, allergists are hearing from their patients – those with allergies and especially those suffering from asthma. They are worried that having asthma means they're at increased risk for developing symptoms from COVID-19 if they are exposed. They also wonder if their symptoms will be more dangerous if they have the virus. In addition, an announcement regarding a shortage of albuterol has increased anxiety throughout the country. (Get updated information on [FDA approval of a generic albuterol inhaler.](#))

It is important if you have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or suspect you may have COVID-19 and are using a nebulizer at home, that you know the virus may persist in droplets in the air for 1-2 hours. Therefore, you should administer nebulized albuterol in a location that minimizes exposure to members of your household who aren't infected. Choose a location for your treatment where air is not recirculated into the home – places like a porch or patio, or in a garage – areas where surfaces can be cleaned more easily or may not need cleaning.

The allergists of the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology have information and tips to share. We are making every effort to keep our information updated and will be linking to the most current news on the virus to keep you in the loop.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has listed asthma as one of the chronic illnesses that may increase the chance of a severe case of COVID-19. So, what do you need to know if you or a family member suffers from asthma? Read the points below for more information.

- Respiratory viruses are the most common trigger for asthma exacerbations (severe worsening typically requiring oral steroids to relieve symptoms).
- Not all viruses affect asthma patients equally. Some viruses such as influenza and rhinovirus are more likely to trigger asthma flares than others.
- Right now, we don't know if COVID-19 is one of those viruses that tends to trigger asthma exacerbation.
- There is no clear evidence that patients with asthma are at any higher risk of contracting COVID-19.
- Asthma is an “underlying medical condition” that may be associated with more severe disease if you are infected with COVID-19.

- There is no evidence that asthma medications used to prevent symptoms (inhaled steroids, oral steroids, montelukast, biologics), etc. increase your risk of contracting COVID-19.
- If you become infected, use caution and avoid experimental treatments unless the treatment is specifically recommended by the physician caring for you.

The American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology recommends:

- Continuing or resuming your asthma routine that helps you control your symptoms.
- Using short acting rescue medications as needed for symptoms.
- Following your asthma action plan if you have one.
- Following CDC guidelines regarding infection control, hygiene, social distancing, etc.
- If you have an upcoming appointment with your allergist, please call to confirm. Many allergists are using telemedicine for return appointments.
- Contacting your allergist if you have questions about your medications or if your symptoms seem to be worsening or not under control.

Links

[A message to asthma sufferers about a shortage of albuterol metered-dose inhalers](#) (Updated 4/9/2020)

[From the FDA: Beware of fraudulent Coronavirus tests, vaccines and treatments](#) (Current as of 3/24/2020)

[CDC recommendations for using cloth face coverings to help slow the spread of COVID-19](#) (4/4/2020)

[During COVID-19 pandemic, normal allergy and asthma medications should be continued](#) (3/26/2020)

[Asthma-specific information and recommendations from the CDC](#) (Updated 3/17/2020)

[Resources for those with food allergies on accessing safe foods](#)

[COVID-19 resources for health care professionals from the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology](#)

Videos

[COVID-19 and asthma: What you need to know \(4/2/2020\)](#)

[COVID-19 or seasonal allergies: How to tell the difference \(4/2/2020\)](#)

How to tell the difference between COVID-19, asthma and nasal allergies

Symptom	COVID-19	Asthma	Allergies
Dry cough	✓	✓	
Mucus/postnasal drip			✓
Chest discomfort/pain	✓		
Shortness of breath	✓	✓	
Wheezing		✓	
Fever	✓		
Sneezing			✓
Nasal and eye watering and itching			✓

Updated 4/9/2020