

ASTHMA & CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)



ASTHMA
AUSTRALIA

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The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is a difficult time for all of us and an especially worrying time for people with asthma and other airways diseases. This information resource aims to provide you with basic information about the virus, what it means for people with asthma and what we can all do to reduce our vulnerability and maximise the safety of ourselves and those around us.

This Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a very contagious virus which the human body has not seen before. As a result, it has spread very quickly throughout the world and is making many people very sick. The virus is spread when people come into contact with it on a surface and then contaminate themselves by touching their mouth, nose and/or eyes. It is also spread through the act of coughing and sneezing in close proximity to others. This is the same with all viruses.

People most vulnerable to bad infections:

- the elderly, particularly over 70 years;
- people over 65 years with one or more medical conditions;
- people with low immunity; and
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over 50 years with and without medical conditions

As a community, we are all obliged to do everything we can to stop the spread of this infection and protect the safety and wellbeing of the most vulnerable in our community.

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There is no evidence yet to suggest that people with asthma are more at risk of contracting coronavirus (COVID-19). This means that among all known coronavirus cases and cases that have required hospitalisation, there are few people with a background of asthma. While this is good news, we urge people with asthma to remain vigilant about their choices and behaviours during this time, following closely the state and federal governments' public health directions:

- Practice social distancing
- Practice good hygiene measures
- Follow self-isolation orders if needed.

In addition, we recommend people with asthma:

- Improve or maintain their asthma control by:
 - Keep taking regular preventer (usually twice daily), even if they feel well.
 - Ensure correct use of their inhaler device(s)
 - Attend to and improve control of other medical conditions
 - Manage their known triggers where possible
 - Stop or reduce risky behaviours (quit smoking)
- Follow their written Asthma Action Plan
 - Is your asthma under control? Find out [here](#)
- Get the flu vaccine

In general, we recommend checking in with your doctor about your overall asthma control during this time.



IMPORTANT



In case of worsening asthma symptoms at any time, people with asthma should follow their doctors' instructions on their written Asthma Action Plan.

In case of persistent symptoms, follow the steps for **Asthma First Aid** and seek help urgently if symptoms don't improve or return within three hours after taking your reliever.

In the case of fever, difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle/joint aches and pains, seek urgent medical care. Call ahead first so your health service can plan for your arrival and protect you and others in the case of infection.

If your asthma worsens continue to follow Asthma First Aid, and do not hesitate to call an ambulance on 000 in the case of an asthma attack.

THREE WAYS TO PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST COVID-19 THIS WINTER

1 Practice social distancing

2 Practice good hygiene measures

3 Follow self-isolation orders if needed

The health of people with asthma is our biggest priority as we face Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

We are here to support you for more information visit asthma.org.au or call 1800 ASTHMA (1800 278 462) to speak to an Asthma Educator.

