

World Allergy Organization (WAO): Allergic patients during COVID-19 pandemic

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I have asthma and allergic rhinitis and I am worried about everything I hear about COVID-19; what should I do?

1. **Don't panic**, and read on to learn what we currently know about the novel coronavirus disease called COVID-19. What is known about the virus (SARS-Cov-2) is updated fairly frequently as we learn more about it. The information provided here is based on the best currently available data.

- People with asthma, children and adults, are included in a higher risk group for coronavirus disease, but fortunately the available data showed that almost all of these patients were **not severely affected**, with no reference to asthmatics among the series of patients already known.
- The **same situation** has been found in relation to other allergic diseases such as allergic rhinitis and atopic dermatitis.
- There is currently **no specific treatment or vaccine to prevent** COVID-19.
- The **best way** to avoid getting the illness is to avoid being exposed to anyone with the virus. Maintaining social distance and practicing good hand hygiene is the best way to protect yourself and the others from being exposed to the virus.

A. Stay **away** from others who are sick

B. **Avoid** crowds or large gatherings

C. Practice regular hand hygiene by **washing** with water and soap for at least **20 seconds** at a time

D. **Do not touch** your mouth, nose or eyes with unwashed hands

2. It is important that you **continue to take** your **medications** for asthma, allergic rhinitis or any other allergic disease exactly as prescribed. Do not change or stop your medications, including specific **immunotherapy** (antiallergic vaccine), without talking to your allergist or other health care provider. There is currently no evidence that inhaled corticosteroids (nasal or bronchial), antihistamines or biologic medications have any effect on the risk of

contracting COVID-19. If you stop or modify your treatment, you run the **risk** that your allergic disease, particularly your asthma control, could become worse, causing you to need rescue medical treatment or be admitted to the hospital.

Recommendations:

- I. **Know how** to use your inhaler(s), and use them as prescribed.
- II. **Avoid** your asthma triggers, such as indoor and outdoor allergens and irritants / pollutants and ban smoke, particularly important for those that are on quarantine.
- III. **Ensure** you have an asthma action plan and follow it.
- IV. **Ensure** that you have enough medicine in the home to maintain your supply.
- V. **Perform** some respiratory exercises.
- VI. **Keep** in touch with your allergist!



<https://www.worldallergy.org>