

# COVID-19 and Lung Health

In this time of COVID-19, it's especially important that everyone with a chronic lung disease, such as asthma or COPD, protect their lung health.



People with lung disease are more likely to get seriously ill from respiratory infections.

## **Take COVID-19/other vaccines:**

- There are vaccines that help prevent serious illness from COVID-19, and other respiratory infections such as influenza (flu), RSV, and Strep bacterial pneumonia.
- Talk to your healthcare provider about which vaccines are right for you, when to take them (seasonally or at any time during the year), and how many shots are needed to be fully protected.
- If you have concerns about vaccines, such as safety, side effects, costs, or scheduling, talk to a member of your healthcare team who you trust.
- Learn more about vaccines:

[\*\*American Thoracic Society \(ATS\)\*\*](#)

[\*\*American Lung Association \(ALA\)\*\*](#)

[\*\*Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)\*\*](#)

[\*\*National Foundation for Infectious Diseases \(NFID\)\*\*](#)

[\*\*National Institutes of Health \(NIH\) CEAL Consortium\*\*](#)

## **Follow your treatment plan:**

- Use all of your medicines as directed by your healthcare provider, including inhaled medicines or pills.
- If you smoke, stop smoking. Your healthcare provider can prescribe medications to help you quit.
- Use your treatments and equipment as prescribed (oxygen therapy, nebulizer, CPAP) and keep them clean and in good order.
- Make sure that you have 90-day supplies of medications so that you have all that you need.
  - Be in touch with your healthcare provider, pharmacy, and insurance company, if you don't have what you need.
- If you have one, refer to your written or electronic action plan, which can help you make day-to-day management decisions.

## **Take measures to avoid getting sick:**

- Wash your hands often and properly, by washing

with soap and water for 20 seconds; use alcohol-based sanitizer (60% alcohol) if soap and water are unavailable.

- Stay away from people who are sick.
- Wear a high quality mask (N95, KN95 or KF94) as recommended by your healthcare provider.
- Encourage family members who have symptoms (fever, cough, runny nose, etc.) to get tested for COVID and isolate themselves as recommended.
- Practice self care, including getting enough sleep, managing excess stress, quitting smoking, and eating a nutritious diet.

**Having a lung problem means you are at greater risk of getting seriously ill if you get COVID-19, so it's best to do what you can to stay healthy!**

## **Call your healthcare provider if you have any concerning symptoms, such as:**

- A high fever
  - A cough that's unusual for you
  - Unusual shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Loss of smell/taste
  - Other symptoms that are out of the ordinary
- Many of these symptoms can be seen with other infections, including flu. It is important to get tested (with home kit or at testing site) if you suspect you have COVID-19 or the flu. You may need treatment with medicines that work best in the first few days of illness.

## **Seek prompt medical attention if:**

- You have severe shortness of breath, chest pain, confusion, or other symptoms that could be a medical emergency.

## **Be aware of symptoms. Long-COVID:**

- If you have had COVID infection in the past and your health condition continues to remain worse for more than four weeks when compared to before your COVID illness, you may have a condition called "Long-COVID". Please call your healthcare provider and ask to be evaluated.