

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.



Tips to protect your lung health:

- Take the COVID-19 and booster vaccines as recommended by your healthcare provider. Remember to get your influenza vaccine as soon as it is available.
- Stick to your doctor-prescribed treatment plan.
- Take simple steps to avoid getting sick.
- Call your healthcare provider if you have any unusual symptoms. Be aware of symptoms of Long-COVID.

Take COVID-19/other vaccines:

- People with lung disease are more likely to get seriously ill from respiratory infections.
- There are vaccines that help prevent serious illness from COVID-19, and other respiratory infections such as influenza (flu), and Strept 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 from these high-quality materials:

American Thoracic Society (ATS): <https://www.thoracic.org/patients/patient-resources/covid-19.php>

American Lung Association (ALA): <https://www.lung.org/lung-health-diseases/lung-disease-lookup/covid-19/action-initiative/vaccine-toolkit/better-for-it>

Centers for Disease Control (CDC): <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html>

National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID): <https://www.nfid.org/immunization/10-reasons-to-get-vaccinated/>

National Institutes of Health (NIH) CEAL Consortium: <https://covid19community.nih.gov/resources/learning-about-vaccines>

Follow your treatment plan:

- Use all of your medicines as directed by your doctor, including inhaled medicines or pills
- Use your treatments and equipment as prescribed (oxygen therapy, nebulizer, CPAP) and keep them clean and in good order

- Make sure that you have sufficient 90-day supplies of medications to make sure you have all that you need.
 - Be in touch with your doctor, pharmacy, and insurance company, to make sure you can get 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 quarantine until they have a negative test.
- Practice self care, including getting enough sleep, managing excess stress, 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 it 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 out of the ordinary for you
- Unusual shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Loss of smell/taste
- Other symptoms that are out of the ordinary

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 of Long-COVID:

- If you have had COVID infection in the past and your health condition continue 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 doctor and ask to be evaluated.