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**COVID-19 and Asthma: What Patients Need to Know**

(Insert city, state) – The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic is scary for all people, but for those with asthma there is great fear that they will have a worse outcome or be more likely to get SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19). Yet it is important for patients to understand what the current data on asthma and COVID-19 is saying, according to (insert physician name) from (insert practice name).

“At this time, there is no evidence of increased infection rates in those with asthma,” said (insert physician name).

There has been one report—a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report from April 8](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/pdfs/mm6915e3-H.pdf)—suggesting that asthma may increase the risk of hospitalization from COVID-19 in 18-49 year-old adults; however, this is based on a small number of patients. And in the opposite direction are data from several cities/countries with high COVID-19 infections where asthma was under-represented in those who died from COVID-19.

While these numbers may change as more research emerges, there remain no data on non-hospitalized patients, so it is unknown if asthma is a risk factor for getting the virus or having more severe disease.

“In the current pandemic, the best thing a person with asthma can do is to get and keep their asthma under control. Stopping a controller medication will put the person at risk for developing an asthma exacerbation, and treatment of an exacerbation will likely require going to the emergency department or urgent care, where the individual has a much higher risk of being exposed to someone with COVID-19,” said (insert physician name).

There are other misconceptions being circulated on asthma and COVID-19, including:

* Early reports of systemic corticosteroids being associated with death from COVID-19 are being extrapolated to include ALL steroids as being dangerous. However, inhaled corticosteroids are safe and necessary for patients with asthma to continue to use in order to prevent exacerbation.
* Systemic corticosteroids can and should be used to treat an asthma exacerbation, even if it is caused by COVID-19.
* Online discussion of nebulizers is causing confusion for some, as this is misconstrued to indicate that someone can catch COVID-19 from using a nebulizer. If patients require treatment with nebulized medications, such as albuterol or atrovent due to asthma, they should start treatment early and repeat until better. COVID-19 does not ‘live’ inside nebulizers. However, if the person with asthma who is receiving nebulized treatment has COVID-19, they could spread to others in close proximity due to the respiratory droplets created through the nebulizer.

“The bottom line for people with asthma during this pandemic is to keep doing what you have been doing all along—continue taking your controller medication and inform your healthcare provider of any symptoms that you may develop. And of course, remember to practice social distancing and wash your hands,” said (insert physician name).

(Insert boilerplate copy about your practice.)

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