

MAY 2020



## ASTHMA & ALLERGY AWARENESS MONTH

According to the NIH, about **18 million adults in the United States have asthma**, and of those, 10% have severe asthma. The CDC says **people with asthma may be at higher risk of getting very sick from COVID-19**, because the illness can affect the respiratory tract - the nose, throat, and lungs - and cause an asthma attack. **COVID-19 may also lead to pneumonia and acute respiratory disease, which can be more serious in people with asthma.**

- Keep your asthma under control by following your asthma plan.
- Know how to use your inhaler.
- Avoid your asthma triggers.
- Continue your current medications, including any inhalers with steroids in them.
- Do not stop any medications or change your asthma treatment plan without talking to your healthcare provider.
- Discuss any concerns about your treatment with your healthcare provider.
- Make sure that you have a 30 day quantity of medications and supplies in case you need to stay home for a long time.
- As the number of COVID-19 cases increase, it is natural to feel concerned or stressed. Strong emotions can trigger an asthma attack. Take steps to help yourself cope with stress and anxiety.



## INHALER SHORTAGE

Having trouble getting an albuterol inhaler? The American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology recommends practical ideas for coping:



Don't panic. Check your inhaler to make sure it still has medicine.



If necessary, you can likely use your expired albuterol inhaler as it is probably still at least partially effective.



Contact your health care provider for other appropriate options available.



It is important that you do not overuse your albuterol inhaler, as one canister should last for months.

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## ALLERGY Q&A



### IS SNEEZING A COMMON CORONAVIRUS SYMPTOM?

The new coronavirus doesn't cause sneezing. But if you do sneeze, it's important to cover your nose and mouth with a tissue to keep the virus from spreading.



### ARE MY RED EYES ALLERGIES OR CORONAVIRUS?

Only about 1% to 3% of people with COVID-19 will have pinkeye. If you notice that your eyes are red, the odds are that it's not because of the coronavirus. Call your doctor if you have red eyes with other COVID-19 symptoms.



### CAN YOU HAVE ALLERGIES AND CORONAVIRUS?

You can have allergies and a viral infection at the same time. If you have classic allergy signs like itchy eyes and a runny nose along with COVID-19 symptoms like fatigue and a fever, call your doctor.



## ALLERGY SYMPTOMS VS. COVID-19

The main warning signs of COVID-19, the disease caused by the new coronavirus, are fever, fatigue, and a dry cough. Sometimes, it also causes cold-like symptoms like a runny nose. During allergy season, it may be hard to tell the difference between COVID-19 and allergies.

Allergy symptoms happen partly because of inflammation, that is caused by your body overreacting to things like pollen or mold. If you get allergies every year, watch for symptoms that are different from what you've had before.

COVID-19 SYMPTOMS	ALLERGY SYMPTOMS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fever</li><li>• Dry cough</li><li>• Trouble breathing</li><li>• Body aches</li><li>• Very sore throat</li><li>• Fatigue that comes on quickly</li><li>• Gastrointestinal problems like nausea or diarrhea</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Runny nose</li><li>• Dry, tickly cough</li><li>• Itchy or watery eyes</li><li>• Congestion</li><li>• Severe allergies can make you can feel tightness in your chest and short of breath, especially if you have asthma</li></ul>
	