



## Asthma Factsheet 3

Updated on 23 April 2020

## Advice for people who have asthma and are not in high risk groups

In line with Asthma UK and the British Thoracic Society (BTS), if a person has asthma and is NOT listed in the high groups then provide them with the following advice:<sup>1,2</sup>

The best way to avoid being exposed to the virus and stop the spread is to:

- Stay at home and only go out for essential items.
- Maintain social distancing – keeping two meters apart from people.
- Plan support with daily routine if they feel the spread of the virus is causing significant disruption to their life or they get symptoms and need to self-isolate. This may include getting food, medication and other essential items.
- Maintain good personal hygiene by washing their hands regularly with soap and water at a duration of 20 seconds.
- Sneeze or cough into a tissue and dispose of it immediately, or sneeze or cough into their elbow/sleeve where appropriate
- Clean regularly touched surfaces.
- Only go out for one form of exercise once a day.
- To ensure they have a sufficient supply of their medication at home and support their local pharmacy and GP practice by ensuring they re-order their repeat prescription in good time.

---

<sup>1</sup>Asthma UK Coronavirus Health advice for people with asthma [www.asthmauk.org](http://www.asthmauk.org)

<sup>2</sup>British Thoracic Society: Advice for Healthcare Professionals Treating People with Asthma (adults) in relation to COVID-19



## Asthma Factsheet 3

Updated on 23 April 2020

### Advice for people who have asthma and are not in high risk groups

REMEMBER to inform people not to over order or stock pile their inhalers and NOT to share their inhalers or spacers with any family and friends.

Remind people with asthma (where appropriate) that there is no evidence that inhaled steroids increase the risk of getting COVID-19 so people should continue to use their ALL their medications as prescribed in line with their personalised asthma action plan.

It is really important for people to have their inhaler technique checked regularly to ensure full pharmacological effect as well as reduce side effects. Signpost people who have asthma to the [following video](#) to help them do this<sup>3</sup>.

In line with BTS guidance, the management of asthma exacerbations remains unchanged. Therefore, people should continue to use all of their prescribed medications as directed by the relevant healthcare professional and contact their GP surgery. As outlined by the BTS:

*“If a course of steroids is clinically indicated (symptoms and signs of bronchospasm/wheeze), it should not be withheld. Antibiotics are only advised if sputum changes colour, thickens or increases in volume. As health services are likely to be stretched for the next few months, if patients have a good understanding of their self- management plan then it is reasonable for them to have a short course of steroids at home (rescue pack). This is particularly important for patients with severe asthma.”<sup>4</sup>*

It is important that where such rescue packs form part of a self-management plan, people are reminded to inform their GP before they initiate them or if they have started so the appropriate care can be given.

<sup>3</sup> Asthma UK How to use your inhaler? <https://www.asthma.org.uk/advice/inhaler-videos/>

<sup>4</sup> British Thoracic Society: Advice for Healthcare Professionals Treating People with Asthma (adults) in relation to COVID-19



## Asthma Factsheet 3

Updated on 23 April 2020

### Advice for people who have asthma and are not in high risk groups

As outlined by the Primary Care Respiratory Society (PCRS) rescue packs should not be placed on repeat prescription and every attached needs to be reviewed to understand why before adjusting any treatment plan.<sup>5</sup>

Further details can be found on:

- British Thoracic Society: Advice for Healthcare Professionals Treating People with Asthma (adults) in relation to COVID-19
- Asthma UK.org
- PCRPS Pragmatic Guidance Diagnosing and managing asthma attacks and people with COPD presenting in crisis during the UK COVID- 19 epidemic

---

<sup>5</sup> PCRPS Pragmatic Guidance Diagnosing and managing asthma attacks and people with COPD presenting in crisis during the UK COVID- 19 epidemic