

PATIENT INFORMATION: COVID & MEDICATIONS THAT AFFECT THE IMMUNE SYSTEM

You may be on a medication your dermatologist has prescribed that has an effect on your immune system and wonder what that means for COVID-19.

If you are currently taking one of these medications and do NOT display signs or symptoms of COVID and have not tested positive:

BIOLOGIC (INJECTABLE MEDICATIONS) FOR PSORIASIS

At present, there is no evidence that you would be at more risk while taking a certain biologic medications and thus we would not recommend that you stop your medication without discussing with your certified dermatologist. From clinical trial data, it would appear that medications that block IL-17 (ixekizumab, secukinumab, brodalumab) as well as medications that block IL-23 (guselkumab, rizankizumab) do not increase the risk of viral and respiratory infections. Some patients who are taking a TNF-alpha inhibitor (infliximab, adalimumab, etanercept or certolizumab) or and IL-12/23 (ustekinumab) may have special considerations, and this should be discussed on a case-by-case basis with your dermatologist.

BIOLOGICS FOR ECZEMA

Dupilumab is a medication for atopic dermatitis and has not been shown to increase the risk of viral or respiratory infections. Dupilumab should never be stopped suddenly without consultation with your dermatologist.

BIOLOGICS FOR HIVES

Medications like Omalizumab do not suppress the immune system and would not increase the risk for viral or respiratory infections.

ORAL MEDICATIONS

Apremilast is a medication that has not been shown to increase risk of infections.

Other medications like azathioprine, cyclosporine, cellcept/MMF, prednisone and methotrexate (depending on the dose), can suppress the immune system and may need to be held or changed, however, this should be discussed with your dermatologist.

If you are on one of these medications and test POSITIVE for COVID-19 you should discuss the need to discontinue or hold your medication with your dermatologist.

This is a new virus and therefore we do not have firm evidence for recommendations but will continue to monitor the situation closely and update as needed.

It is important to note that other medications your dermatologist may have given you (for example, isotretinoin, acitretin) would not have any impact on the risk of viral infection and do not suppress your immune system.

SOME BASIC ADVICE TO KEEP YOU SAFE WITH COVID-19: DO THE “5”

WASH YOUR HANDS



wet hands with
warm water



apply soap



for at least 20 seconds,
make sure to wash:



palm and back
of each hand



between
fingers



thumbs



under nails



rinse well



dry hands well
with paper towel

COUGH ETIQUETTE

Cough into your elbow

DON'T TOUCH YOUR FACE

STAY APART (at least 2m)

Do your part and practice social distancing

STAY HOME

If you have travelled or feel sick
Also stay home unless you must go out