

Ask the Doctor

Presented by



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What is Corona Virus?

Corona Virus = family of viruses, that includes the common cold, which causes mild to moderate upper respiratory tract symptoms. These viruses are zoonotic, often infecting animals, and occasionally humans through contact. There are seven coronaviruses that cause human disease. These include:

- Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome known as SARS
- Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome known as MERS
- Corona Virus Disease 2019 known as COVID-19
 - causes moderate to severe disease in humans

How long is the incubation period for COVID-19?

2-14 days

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Fever, fatigue, cough, diarrhea and shortness of breath that can progress to more severe respiratory illness, pneumonia, and/or respiratory failure. Some individuals may be sick and show no symptoms but may be contagious.

How does it get transmitted?

Respiratory secretions can be transmitted through droplets and fomites – objects or materials that can carry the virus.

Who is at risk?

Everybody

Are people with lupus at higher risk?

It is not clear that people with lupus are at higher risk for COVID-19 or at risk for worse complications. Data from the SARS and MERS epidemics did not show an increased risk in people with lupus. Thus far, China and Italy have not reported any severe cases of individuals with lupus.

What should people with lupus do to stay safe?

Do what everyone else is doing.

- Cancel travel including non-essential travel
- Social distance – clear rules about social distancing have been outlined
- Reducing contact with others
- Skipping hugs and handshakes
- Hand washing
- Using hand sanitizers
- Stay at home and avoid contact with anyone that might be infected
- Work from home
 - For some professions, working from home may not be possible; discuss with your doctor if you should have special accommodations
- Do not take unnecessary risks
- Many hospitals are encouraging or mandating telemedicine visits
 - This option may soon extend to everyone.

How about the medications?

- Plaquenil and Chloroquine may be protective - clinical trials are ongoing. Obviously, keep taking your Plaquenil.
- Prednisone is not good to treat COVID. If you need it for SLE, talk to your doctor and see if it would be possible to taper it to the lowest dose that controls your symptoms.
- Continue taking Immunosuppressants that you need to treat your lupus.
- *Of course, any changes in your medications should be discussed with your doctor.*

What should you do if you get sick?

- Call your doctor.
- If you have a fever and a cough – you might have COVID. Your doctor will advise you what to do depending on how severe your lupus is and the medications you are taking.
- If you have a fever, cough and are short of breath you should go to the emergency room.

How do we treat COVID-19?

Practice infection control measures and supportive management of complications.

Help Us Solve
The Cruel Mystery

LUPUS[™]

FOUNDATION OF AMERICA
NEW JERSEY CHAPTER

Mission Statement

The Lupus Foundation of America, New Jersey Chapter, Inc.'s mission is to improve the quality of life for all people affected by lupus through research, education, and advocacy programs.