

Dear Friends of GINA,

People with asthma should continue to use their inhaled asthma controller medications during the COVID-19 epidemic

Some sources have suggested that “corticosteroids” should be avoided during the COVID-19 epidemic. This advice is about the use of oral corticosteroids unless there is a clear indication for their use. However, **patients with asthma should not stop their prescribed inhaled corticosteroid controller medication (or prescribed oral corticosteroids)**. Stopping inhaled corticosteroids often leads to potentially dangerous worsening of asthma, and avoiding oral corticosteroids during severe asthma attacks may have serious consequences. Long-term oral corticosteroids may sometimes be required to treat severe asthma, and it may be dangerous to stop them suddenly. Always discuss with your doctor or nurse before stopping **any** asthma medication.

Keep taking your inhaled asthma controller medication, and if your asthma gets worse, follow the instructions on your asthma action plan for how to change your asthma medications and when to seek medical help.

Practical advice for reducing your risk of contracting COVID-19 can be found on the website of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC)

at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/prevention.html>. One of the most important ways of protecting yourself is to wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, and never touch your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.

Global Initiative for Asthma (GINA)

19 March 2020

This advice will be updated if new evidence emerges about management of COVID-19 in patients with asthma

This message can also be found at the link below and we would appreciate sharing to the appropriate channels for dissemination:

<https://ginasthma.org/recommendations-for-inhaled-asthma-controller-medications/>

Sincerely,

The GINA Board of Directors and Science Committee.