

**COVID-19, COPD and You:  
Important Strategies from Leading  
Medical Experts on Managing Your  
Health**

**Tuesday, March 17, 2020**



# Introductory Remarks



Corinne Costa Davis  
Chief Executive Officer  
COPD Foundation



# DISCLAIMER

***The information presented on this webinar should not serve as a substitute for medical advice and any content discussed should not be used for medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Please consult with a physician before making changes to your own COPD management plan and if you have any concerns about COVID-19 symptoms.***

***The information presented on today's webinar about COVID-19 was current as of Tuesday, March 17. The information about the disease and the recommendations discussed today are changing rapidly and if you are viewing the recording of the webinar, this information may no longer be accurate.***

# TODAYS AGENDA

1. Introductions
2. What do we know and what do we not know about the coronavirus and COVID-19?
3. COVID-19 and COPD-Signs and Symptoms to Watch
4. COVID-19 and COPD-Prevention
5. COVID-19 and COPD: Emotional Well-Being
6. COVID-19 and COPD: Resources

# TODAY'S SPEAKERS



**Josh Sharfstein, MD**  
Vice Dean for Public Health Practice and Community Engagement,  
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health



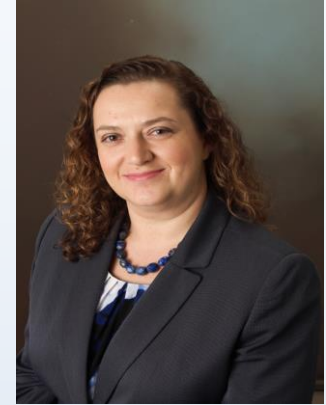
**Byron Thomashow, MD**  
Professor of Medicine, Columbia University & NY Presbyterian Hospital  
Chief Medical Officer, COPD Foundation



**Robert Wise, MD**  
Professor of Medicine, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine  
Chair-Medical & Scientific Advisory Committee, COPD Foundation



**Stephanie Williams, RRT**  
Director of Community Programs, COPD Foundation



**Jamie Sullivan, MPH**  
Vice President of Public Affairs, COPD Foundation

# What do we know and what don't we know about the coronavirus and COVID-19?

*Dr. Josh Sharfstein*

## Frequently Asked Questions:

1. What is COVID-19?
2. How is COVID-19 spread?
3. When can COVID-19 be spread?
4. How contagious is COVID-19?
5. Who is at higher-risk for developing severe complications from COVID-19?
6. Why are older adults and people with chronic conditions more at-risk for severe complications?
7. Will people with COPD be able to get tested?

## What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a new disease caused by a **novel coronavirus** that is different than the common cold, flu or pneumonia. COVID-19 emerged in China in late 2019 and is now present in multiple other countries, including the U.S.

## How is COVID-19 Spread?

- From one person to another
- In close contact (less than 6 feet apart)
- Through respiratory droplets that are spread when an infected person sneezes or coughs

## When Can COVID-19 be Spread?

- People who have symptoms are the most contagious
- People do not have symptoms can still spread the disease, but it is less likely
- It is possible to be infected from touching contaminated surfaces and then touching your eyes, nose or mouth, but it is less likely

# How Contagious is COVID-19?

The virus that causes COVID-19 seems to spread easily and sustainably (without stopping).

**Community Spread** means people have been infected with the virus in an area, including some who are not sure how or where they became infected.

## Current Situation in the U.S. As of 3/17/20

Total Cases: 5,204

Deaths: 92

States With Cases: 49

## Current Global Situation:

Total Cases: 189,452

Total Deaths: 7,505



## Who is at a higher risk for developing severe complications from COVID-19?

- Older adults
- People with chronic conditions such as;
  - Heart disease
  - Lung disease
  - Diabetes

## Why are older adults and people with chronic conditions more at-risk for severe complications?

- Immune function (how well our bodies fight off infections) goes down as we age
- More chance that our immune system “overreacts” to a virus producing more inflammation, fever or organ damage
- Chronic diseases can cause impaired organ function and make it more likely to get an infection
- Interactions and side effects from multiple medications

# Will people with COPD be able to get tested?

- Test availability is different in each state or city
- Over time, there will be more tests available
- Each healthcare facility may make different decisions on who to test. They likely consider;
  - Symptoms
  - Exposure to an infected person
  - Availability of kits in the area
  - Presence of community-spread infections

# Johns Hopkins University Resources

## Information on coronavirus from Johns Hopkins

<http://coronavirus.jhu.edu>

## Podcast interviewing experts on coronavirus

<http://bit.ly/publichealthoncall>

# Signs and Symptoms COVID-19 and COPD

*Dr. Byron Thomashow*

## Frequently Asked Questions:

1. What is the difference between a typical COPD exacerbation (flare-up) and symptoms of COVID-19?
2. What should I do if I am concerned about symptoms of an exacerbation or COVID-19?
3. What happens if I get COVID-19? Are there medicines? Will I have to be in the hospital?
4. Will COVID-19 make my COPD worse in the long-term?

# How do we know the difference between a typical exacerbation (flare-up) and symptoms of COVID-19?

## COVID-19 Common Symptoms

- Cough
- **Fever**
- Shortness of breath

**High fever is NOT a common symptom of COPD exacerbations.\* If you have a high-fever, along with worsening exacerbation symptoms, call your doctor!**

*\*varies by individual, more common in bronchiectasis*

Classic Upper Respiratory Symptoms (i.e. runny nose) can occur in COVID-19 but are relatively RARE

## Know Your Normal!

Identify your typical experiences with exacerbations of COPD and monitor for changes.

- ✓ Amount or type of cough
- ✓ Dyspnea “shortness of breath”
- ✓ Levels of oxygen use
- ✓ Resting oxygen saturation
- ✓ Reliance on your rescue inhaler

# What should I do if I am concerned about symptoms of an exacerbation or COVID-19?

## Revisit your COPD Action Plan

*If you agreed to start antibiotics and/or steroids upon early signs of an exacerbation, call your doctor to see if they would suggest adding a phone consultation before you start these medications.*

## WHEN IN DOUBT CALL FIRST

*\*Unless you are in a life-threatening situation*



[My COPD Action Plan \(PDF\)](#)

[COPD pocket Consultant Guide App \(Google Play\)](#)

[COPD pocket Consultant Guide App \(AppStore\)](#)

# What happens if I get COVID-19?

## Are there medicines? Will I have to be in the hospital?

- There are no approved treatments specific to COVID-19
- There are clinical trials underway to develop a vaccine and to test several existing drugs to see if they can be used to lessen the symptoms of COVID-19
- You might be able to recover at home, but **ONLY** your doctors can help you decide if you need to be in the hospital
- If you get COVID-19, **ask your doctor;**
  - ✓ Should I keep using my nebulized medications?
  - ✓ Should I keep using my meter dose inhalers?
  - ✓ If I am on a steroid (either an inhaled steroid or oral prednisone), should I stop taking it and how should I stop?
  - ✓ What over the counter medications are safe to relieve symptoms?
  - ✓ When should I go to the emergency room?

# Will COVID-19 make my symptoms worse in the long-term?

There is not enough evidence specific to COVID-19 to predict how it will affect the long-term lung function and disease course for people with COPD.

*Early data from China suggests COVID-19 can cause changes in lung function (not specific to people with COPD), but we do not know if they are permanent.*

We focus on helping patients avoid exacerbations and address them early when they do occur to minimize the long-term harm. Having a written action plan with your doctor can help. You can complete it on our app or print one out and share it with your doctor and your family.

- [COPD pocket Consultant Guide App \(Google Play\)](#)
- [COPD pocket Consultant Guide App \(AppStore\)](#)
- [My COPD Action Plan \(PDF\)](#)



# Prevention

## COVID-19 and COPD

*Dr. Robert Wise*

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. What is social distancing?
2. What steps should I take to prepare now?
3. Should I cancel appointments?
4. Should I stop going to pulmonary rehabilitation or the gym?
5. Should I cancel home health services?
6. If I must go out of the house or to work, what should I do?

# What is Social Distancing?

Actions you take to reduce contact with others to slow the overall spread of the disease.

- ✓ Stay home as much as possible
- ✓ Work from home if you can
- ✓ If you can't work from home, take a leave of absence if at all feasible for you
- ✓ Ask your pharmacy if they will deliver
- ✓ Utilize grocery delivery services for food & household products
- ✓ Order from restaurant delivery services or curbside pickup if necessary
- ✓ Minimize contact with others in your household who are working in high-risk fields

# What Steps Should I Take to Prepare Now?

- ✓ Stock up on supplies (food, over the counter meds, etc)
- ✓ Request an early refill or a 90-day supply of your medications where possible
- ✓ Call your oxygen company and ask if they have plans to ensure regular deliveries are made on-time.
- ✓ Purchase an oximeter or make sure yours is working
- ✓ Make sure you have a working fever thermometer
- ✓ Plan for who will provide care and services if you get sick AND if your caregiver or family member gets sick
- ✓ Talk to your family and caregivers to help them understand what changes to look for and how you want to be cared for
- ✓ Find resources to stay busy and for home and outdoor exercise (if you can avoid crowds and stay 6 ft away from others)

## **Should I Cancel Appointments?**

If the appointment is not medically necessary, consider cancelling until social distancing is no longer recommended. Medicare has relaxed some rules for telehealth services so ask if your doctor is offering virtual visits.

## **Should I Stop Going to the Gym or Pulmonary Rehab?**

Yes, in most cases pulmonary rehabilitation programs have or will soon be suspended and you should consider exercising at home or outside. The COPD Pocket Consultant Guide Mobile App includes exercise videos.

## **Should I cancel home health services?**

Consult your doctor to determine if the services are medically necessary and if not, postpone further visits. If you require these services, the caregiver should generally wear a mask and gloves while in your home.

# If I must go out of the house or to work, what should I do?

- ✓ Try to keep about 6 feet of distance between you and other people
- ✓ Wash your hands often and use alcohol-based hand sanitizer or wipes
- ✓ Avoid using medications while out unless medically necessary
- ✓ If you use oxygen, consider a few extra steps;
  - ✓ Regularly wipe down your tubing and canula with alcohol pads
  - ✓ Use a fresh canula when you leave the house and wipe it down when you return
  - ✓ Don't set your portable oxygen concentrator or tank down while you are out if possible and be sure to wipe it down with alcohol pads when you return
  - ✓ Make sure you wash your hands or use sanitizer before touching your tubing or canula
  - ✓ Bring an extra set of tubing in case yours accidentally falls onto the ground or another surface
- ✓ Surgical masks are not recommended unless you are sick. Many patients have a hard time breathing with masks on
- ✓ If going to an appointment, have a plan. Call from the parking lot and wait to go in until they are ready to take you back

# **Maintaining Your Emotional Well-Being**

Stephanie Williams, RRT

# Understand Your Anxiety

Different causes of anxiety-

- Uncertainty about the illness itself
- Nervous about impact on health (personal and loved ones)
- Uncertain about medications, resources, symptom management, appointments, etc.
- Isolation
- Forced togetherness

# Coping With Stress

- Be informed, not overinformed
- Have a plan – My COPD Action Plan (and other plans)
- Communication with family and friends





# Being Proactive

- Maintain a routine
- Keep moving
- Enjoy hobbies
- Get plenty of sleep
- Eat right
- Drink water (as appropriate for you)
- Explore new things. Virtually
- Meditation/mindfulness
- Find something to smile or laugh about
- **Take a break from the news**



# Check In and Engage

**Social distance does not mean social isolation**

Stay connected!

Connect by phone, email, text, Facebook, or  
COPD360social.

Organize a family or community check-in

Certain time of the day –

Make it fun or even silly

# Resources for Staying Engaged

## 1. NTM Info and Research Blog

<https://ntminfo.org/news/2020/03/keeping-busy-in-the-time-of-coronavirus/>

## 2. Virtual Museum Tours

<https://www.travelandleisure.com/attractions/museums-galleries/museums-with-virtual-tours>

## 3. Mindfulness Exercises

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/consumer-health/in-depth/mindfulness-exercises/art-20046356>

## 4. Online Book Clubs

<https://www.bustle.com/p/14-online-book-clubs-you-can-join-right-now-8088085>

## 5. Online Courses

<https://www.freecodecamp.org/news/ivy-league-free-online-courses-a0d7ae675869/>

# Resources

Jamie Sullivan, MPH

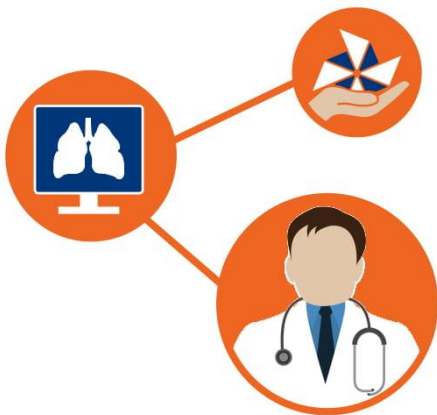




We are dedicated to preventing COPD, improving the lives of those affected and seeking a cure.

We mobilize partnerships between patients, caregivers, healthcare professionals, researchers, academic institutions, government agencies and industry leaders.

We engage, educate and empower our community through a unique 360 degree approach.



CARE



RESEARCH



COMMUNITY



# Resources for COVID-19 Information

**1. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

**2. The World Health Organization:**

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/events-as-they-happen>

**3. Johns Hopkins University:**

<https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/>

**4. Public Health On Call Podcast:**

<https://www.jhsph.edu/podcasts/public-health-on-call/>

**5. COPD Foundation-COVID-19 Page:**

<https://www.copdfoundation.org/Learn-More/I-am-a-Person-with-COPD/Coronavirus-Information.aspx>

**6. COPD Foundation-COVID-19 Blog Updates:**

<https://www.copdfoundation.org/COPD360social/Community/COPD-Digest/Article/1553/A-Coronavirus-Update-for-the-COPD-Community.aspx>



## *You Are Not Alone*

Visit us at [www.copdfoundation.org](http://www.copdfoundation.org)

- ✓ Ask and answer questions from peers on COPD360social
  - ✓ Check-in and share how you are coping
  - ✓ Check our COPD Digest Blog for regular updates
- ✓ Tune-in for follow up webinars and Facebook Live chats

