

COVID-19 Information Sheet for Caregivers

Staying in touch with your loved ones may be more challenging than ever in the wake of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19). Based on currently available information and clinical expertise, older adults and those with some types of chronic medical conditions may be more susceptible to the severe symptoms of COVID-19. Accordingly, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is recommending that older adults stay at home to avoid exposure. Many assisted living and nursing homes are also restricting visitor access to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. **Patients and caregivers should always seek the advice of their health care professional.**

For up-to-date information about COVID-19 (including symptoms, and how to protect yourself and your loved one), please visit the [CDC website](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus) at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus>

If you believe you or your loved one are experiencing symptoms, please call your doctor. If you or your loved one are experiencing an emergency, please call 911.

As a caregiver, the CDC suggests many things you can do as you review your loved one's COVID-19 plan including:



Know what medications your loved one is taking and see if you can help them have extra on hand



Monitor food and other medical supplies needed (oxygen, incontinence, dialysis, wound care) and create a back-up plan



Stock up on non-perishable food to have on hand in your home to minimize trips to stores



If you care for a loved one living in a care facility, monitor the situation, ask about the health of the other residents frequently, and know the protocol if there is an outbreak within the facility



Find out if your loved one's medical providers have a formal "telehealth" system, and if not, ask if they can still communicate by telephone (instead of visits) in case there are interruptions to regular services

Staying connected is critical. Everyone responds differently to stressful situations. According to the CDC, older people and people with chronic diseases who are at higher risk for COVID-19 may respond more strongly to the stress of the coronavirus pandemic. The CDC recommends limiting close contact with others as much as possible, but also indicates that older adults should connect with those they trust to manage the stress of the COVID-19 crisis. The following are some suggestions that may be able to help you stay in contact with loved ones, and please use discretion as to what may be best for your current situation:



Phone and video chat:

- Telephone calls
- Skype
- FaceTime
- WhatsApp

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Mail:

- Letters/cards
- Arts and crafts projects from the kids (with kids out of school this is a great opportunity to keep them busy; they can send art projects to nursing homes so even those without grandchildren can enjoy them)
- Flowers/plants
- Photos to keep up with what loved ones are doing
- Care packages: consider sending materials for activities/hobbies that can be done individually to combat boredom
 - Jigsaw puzzles
 - Crossword puzzle books
 - Books or audiobooks
 - Knitting or crochet kits
 - Arts and crafts supplies
 - Music
 - New recipes/meal plans with corresponding grocery deliveries

Please refer to your local health authorities for guidelines regarding the current use and status of mail services.



Email/text messages:

- Regular updates from loved ones with photos and videos
- Family group texts to stay in contact



Social media:

- Follow family and friends on:
 - Facebook
 - Instagram
 - Twitter
 - Tinybeans (Tinybeans is a free social media app that allows you to create and share an online family album)

In the wake of COVID-19, it is more important than ever to maintain and strengthen the connections to our loved ones. Acadia Pharmaceuticals Inc. is passionate about improving the lives of patients and those that care for them, and we hope these considerations may be helpful as you navigate these challenging times.

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