



## **Coronavirus Guidance for Adult Patients with Heart Failure**

*Updated 07/23/2020*

The coronavirus pandemic is a rapidly evolving situation, and the medical community continues to learn more about the virus and how it is spread. We are monitoring CDC recommendations and adjusting our recommendations as necessary.

Everyone should practice basic infection control preventions to minimize the risk of getting or spreading coronavirus. People of any age that are immunosuppressed or suffer from chronic medical conditions are at increased risk for severe illness due to COVID-19.

People with history of heart failure, cardiomyopathies, hypertension or coronary artery disease are at increased risk for severe illness and should protect themselves from getting COVID-19 by:

- Limiting interaction with other people as much as possible
- Follow [CDC recommendations](#) to prevent getting COVID-19

Please read about [basic prevention guidelines](#), which apply to all populations.

**Additional guidance for our patients from the Heart Failure care team at Michigan Medicine includes:**

### **Use of Masks**

- Face masks are currently recommended for symptomatic individuals to prevent spread to others. The CDC has recommended that everyone wear masks when in public. Governor Whitmer has issued a statewide mandate for mask use while indoors in public places. Michigan Medicine strongly supports mask use for patients.

- Many masks are commercially available. We discourage the use of masks with plastic vents as these are not effective in preventing the release of respiratory droplets. Cloth face masks or coverings, or surgical masks are better.

## **Travel Recommendations**

- We are currently discouraging all international travel. Travel within the United States should be undertaken with caution and is dependent on underlying heart disease. We discourage plane trips/cruises for the following patients:
  - Symptomatic heart failure
  - Pulmonary Hypertension
  - Unrepaired congenital heart disease
  - Other chronic illnesses (cancer, lung, liver and chronic kidney disease )
  - Transplant patients
  - recipient of a left ventricular assist device (LVAD)
  - Subjects receiving chronic immunosuppressant medicines

## **Work Recommendations**

- We are discouraging patients that are immunocompromised (heart transplant recipients or patients taking immunosuppressive medications) from working jobs with significant exposure to others (aka retail establishments such as Starbucks).

## **Treatments**

- There is currently no vaccine or antiviral medication that is known to prevent or treat coronavirus, and it will likely be at least several months before anything is available. Treatment is aimed at supporting symptoms. The [FDA has granted an emergency use authorization for the use of remdesivir](#) to treat severe cases of COVID-19. Please seek care if you have difficulty breathing, fever or chills. Other symptoms can be discussed via phone with your primary care physician or your cardiologist.

## **Heart Failure Management**

- Continue to take your medications as prescribed by your healthcare provider.
- Continue to take angiotensin converting enzymes inhibitors (ACE-I) or angiotensin receptor blockers (ARB) as prescribed by your cardiologist
- Make sure you have at least 30 days supply of your cardiac medicines (blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart failure medications).
- Keep your doctor appointments.
- Do not delay lifesaving treatment or emergency care
- Received recommended vaccination against influenza and pneumococcal disease
- Continue to be physically active while maintaining social distancing
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle

**Contact your healthcare provider's office with additional questions.**

### **Additional Resources:**

CDC - [COVID-19 symptoms](#)

AHA - [Blood pressure management](#)

AHA - [COVID-19 precautions for patients](#)

AHA - [healthy lifestyle amidst COVID-19 outbreak](#)