Guidance for Bone Marrow Failure Patients to Protect Against Coronavirus (COVID-19)

This content has been prepared in consultation with AAMDSIF Medical Advisory Board Chair Mikkael Sekeres MD, MS of Cleveland Clinic and Co-Chair Olatoyosi Odenike MD of the University of Chicago.

As a person with a bone marrow failure condition, such as myelodysplastic syndromes, aplastic anemia, PNH, etc., you are already taking precautions to protect your compromised immune system. With the emergence of COVID-19, you and your caregivers should be especially vigilant to continue this preventive behavior:

- Refrain from touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often for at least 20 seconds with soap and water or using a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Discard the tissue and clean your hands. If a tissue is not available, cough or sneeze into your elbow.
- Avoid shaking hands with others.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick, and discourage people from visiting your home if they have any symptoms of illness.
- Clean frequently touched objects and surfaces with household cleaning spray or antibacterial wipes (for example: tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, toilets, faucets, laptops, keyboards and cell phones).
- Avoid travel as much as possible.
- Avoid crowds and large gatherings, especially in poorly ventilated spaces.
- To the extent possible, avoid contact with high-touch surfaces in public places, such as elevator buttons, door handles, handrails, touchscreens, etc. Flat surfaces, in particular, are more likely to have viruses or bacteria.
- Contact your physician with any questions or concerns specific to your condition.
- Know where to go for COVID-19 testing, as some local clinics may not have the resources or facility to do the COVID-19 testing or even see you.
Additional advice for patients during active and post-ATG treatment, bone marrow transplant recovery or other bone marrow failure therapy:

- Continue to keep your medical appointments – do not skip your scheduled treatments (medical centers are taking extra precautions to prevent the transmission of coronavirus).

- Continue to adhere to your neutropenic diet, if you follow one.

- Take steps to ensure you have a 3-month supply of your medication and possibly arrange mail order delivery of your meds.

- Be prepared to self-quarantine yourself for up to 14 days where necessary and consult your physician regarding ongoing blood transfusions and treatment.


Follow the latest updates from trusted sources:


- **NIH** at [https://www.nih.gov/health-information/coronavirus](https://www.nih.gov/health-information/coronavirus)

- **WHO** at [https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus](https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus)

AAMDSIF will update our website with new information including updated guidance, webinar links, resources and Frequently Asked Questions on COVID-19 at: [www.aamds.org/education/covid-19](http://www.aamds.org/education/covid-19)

If you have questions about bone marrow disease, send an email to help@aamds.org or call (800) 747-2820, ext. 2. You can also follow AAMDSIF on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/aamds](https://www.facebook.com/aamds).