

COVID-19 AND CONTINUING HIV CARE

During the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important that people with HIV continue their treatment.¹ Click here for information on staying connected to care:

<https://aidsinfo.nih.gov/guidelines/html/8/covid-19-and-persons-with-hiv-interim-guidance-/554/interim-guidance-for-covid-19-and-persons-with-hiv>

HIV Clinical Considerations



- People with HIV who have a detectable viral load may be at greater risk for serious illness due to COVID-19, so it is essential to continue care such as antiretroviral therapy (ART) medication.^{1,2}
- People with HIV who become hospitalized should continue their ART during hospitalization. Take all antiretroviral (ARV) medications with you to the hospital, as many ARVs may not be available through the hospital's in-patient pharmacy.
- People with HIV on an ART regimen that includes Ibalizumab (Trogarzo®) IV infusions every 2 weeks should contact their providers or THERA patient support® for assistance 1-833-23-THERA (1-833-238-4372) to plan for continued treatment without interruption.¹
- People with HIV at greater risk for serious illness due to COVID-19 are also those who:
 - have other chronic conditions, such as cancer, diabetes, obesity, or respiratory conditions
 - are age 65+ years
 - are in a nursing home³
- For those with more than one medical condition, it is important to coordinate care.^{1,2}
- Some doctor's appointments, clinic visits, or lab tests may be postponed, particularly for those with well-controlled HIV.¹
- Those with poorly controlled HIV can benefit from continuing or resuming care.
- People with HIV who stopped ART medication can benefit by starting again.
- It's important to keep at least a 30-day supply of medication on hand, and if possible, a 90-day supply.^{1,2}
- No HIV medications (ART) are proven to prevent or treat COVID-19, therefore, it's not necessary to switch medications.^{1,2}
- COVID-19 treatment and vaccine research studies are underway, and people with HIV may want to enroll.



More information is available here: <https://clinicaltrials.gov/>

1. <https://aidsinfo.nih.gov/guidelines/html/8/covid-19-and-persons-with-hiv--interim-guidance-/554/interim-guidance-for-covid-19-and-persons-with-hiv>

2. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/hiv.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fspecific-groups%2Fhiv.html

3. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html>



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Telehealth



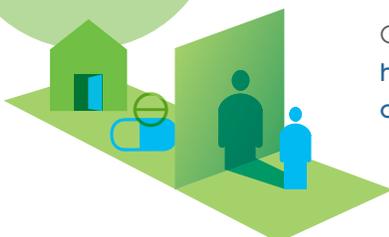
- Some doctors or clinics now use telehealth, virtual visits, phone, or texts instead of face-to-face visits. Patients are encouraged to prepare questions in advance of your visit, such as:
 - What is my viral load and CD4 count?
 - Is my viral load undetectable?
 - What labs do I need?
- Some lab tests and other procedures may be postponed.
- Some health care services may still take place on-site, but new guidance may prevent family or partners from visiting or accompanying patients.
- Pharmacies that offer home delivery or mail order service make social distancing easier.

AIDS Service Organizations and Community-Based Organizations



- Many community organizations have updated information to help people with HIV adapt to changes due to the pandemic.
- Some insurers and AIDS Drug Assistance Programs (ADAPs) may begin offering a 90-day supply of ART drugs in response to COVID-19.
- Staying connected to these organizations is a way to stay informed about changes.

Housing and Access to Healthcare



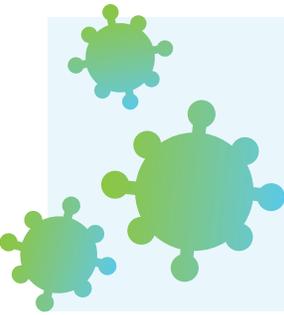
- People with unstable housing have greater health challenges due to COVID-19.
- Social distancing is especially challenging in shelters or shared homes.
- There may be new government funds available for people with HIV for rental assistance, lodging, medical care, groceries, or other needs due to COVID-19.⁴

Click for more information:

<https://www.hudexchange.info/news/cares-act-supplemental-award-information-or-hopwa-grantees/>



4. <https://www.hudexchange.info/news/cares-act-supplemental-award-information-for-hopwa-grantees/>



RESILIENCE: ADAPTING TO COVID-19

Social connections, good mental health, and productive new routines are important during COVID-19 adaptations.



Self-Care and Healthy Outlook: Aging People and People of Color

- Due to a host of social determinants of health (socioeconomic status, education, neighborhood and physical environment, employment, and social support networks) affecting exposure, pre-existing conditions, and other factors, racial and ethnic minorities may be more seriously impacted by COVID-19.⁵
- Good self-care such as a healthy diet and 8 hours of sleep each night are important.^{1,2}
- Stress management, mental health self-care, and social distanced interactions are important to prevent anxiety or depression during COVID-19.



Faith-Based Approaches for Social Connection

- Social distancing rules may prevent large on-site group gatherings.⁶
- Faith-based groups may connect online via livestreaming, or help others while social distancing with projects such as meal delivery.⁶

Click to learn more about faith-based organizations and COVID-19:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/guidance-community-faith-organizations.html>

1. <https://aidsinfo.nih.gov/guidelines/html/8/covid-19-and-persons-with-hiv--interim-guidance-/554/interim-guidance-for-covid-19-and-persons-with-hiv>

2. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/hiv.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fspecific-groups%2Fhiv.html

5. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/racial-ethnic-minorities.html>

6. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/guidance-community-faith-organizations.html>

7. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/14/us/bishop-gerald-glenn-coronavirus.html>