

# IPCRG practice driven answers on COVID-19 and respiratory questions



## Are patients with COPD at a higher risk of infection with SARS-CoV-2 and are they also more likely to experience a more severe course of COVID-19 illness?

### What the research says

Patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) are at increased risk for severe illness associated with viral infection, including COVID-19. Patients with COPD are also at increased risk for progressing to severe COVID-19 disease and death. There is no evidence to indicate that the medications prescribed for the management of COPD, including oral corticosteroids, increase the risk for COVID-19 infection or of severe COVID-19 disease.

### What this means for your clinical practice

- Ensure patients with COPD are symptomatically well controlled
- Encourage your patients with COPD to ensure they take their medications as prescribed and report any increase in respiratory symptoms promptly

- Support your patients with COPD to follow National guidelines, including shielding, in order to minimise their risk of becoming infected with COVID-19.
- When seeing patients face to face, follow National guidelines to minimise cross-infection

For additional information on the treatment of an acutely unwell person with COVID 19 in the primary care setting please see our guidance at: <https://www.ipcrg.org/ICEQ21>

### Useful links and supporting references

Rabbani G, et al. Pre-existing COPD is associated with an increased risk of mortality and severity in COVID-19: a rapid systematic review and meta-analysis. *Exp Rev Respir Med* 2021;15:705-716 Available at:

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33334189/>

Accessed May 2021

Gerayeli FV, et al. COPD and the risk of poor outcomes in COVID-19: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *EClinicalMedicine* 2021;33:100789. Available at:

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/eclinm/article/PIIS2589-5370\(21\)00069-9/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/eclinm/article/PIIS2589-5370(21)00069-9/fulltext).

Accessed May 2021

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