



Triggers & Relapse

- The stress of this situation may place you at greater risk for alcohol or drug use.
 - You may experience increased stress due to changes in your schedule including: work, childcare, and family care; and increased anxiety related to media reports and finances.
- Practice self-care (i.e. reading, meditation, walks) during this stressful time.
- Realize you (and all individuals) may be asked more health questions than usual at visits to your clinician or pharmacy. *This should be the case for everyone and not just those with addiction.*

Medication & Other Treatment Considerations

Ongoing access to medications used to treat addiction and naloxone to is essential.

Maintaining access to your current medication(s):

- Talk to your clinician and your pharmacy about having enough medication (perhaps more than you are used to receiving) and accessing refills. Only reduce your dose of medication if you cannot access your regular dose.
- If you have coronavirus or fever, cough or new breathing problems, you should stay away from others. If you are sick or have any of the symptoms listed above, tell your clinician and pharmacy before coming into pick up medications so that they can prepare to receive you.
- Work with your clinician to adjust the type of monitoring (self-report, urine toxicology, breath testing) and frequency that is best for your clinical situation.

Special Considerations for Access to Methadone:

- Methadone treatment centers can work with state agencies to increase the amount of take-home bottles of methadone (up to 28 days' supply) for some patients and/or those with serious medical problems.
- Patients with exposure to coronavirus may be able to get 14-day take-home doses of methadone to allow them to stay at home and away from others.
- Bottle delivery may become an option at some methadone treatment centers.
- Methadone treatment centers may reduce the number of groups or limit the amount of people who can attend groups.
- If you need to travel, try to arrange guest access to methadone dosing at another treatment program located near where you will be.

Changing medication(s):

- Some patients may be able to switch to long acting version of a medication (monthly injections of buprenorphine or naltrexone) which may help ensure continued treatment.
- If you are already receiving monthly injectable medications you should stay in touch with your clinician regarding scheduling appointment. If you are going to miss an injection or if supplies are limited, you may be able to switch to a pill or film version of your medication.

Counseling & Meetings

- Work with your clinicians to identify alternatives to in-person (including group) visits.
 - This may include telephone or "telemedicine" options.
- Some meetings (AA, NA) may be cancelled or have limited attendance.
- In groups and meetings, try to maintain at least 6 feet between yourself and others at all times ("social distancing"). Avoid hugging, shaking hands and holding hands to keep everyone safe.
- Look online for support groups you can join.
 - Online options include AA Intergroup (<http://aa-intergroup.org/>) and Smart Recovery (www.smartrecovery.org, click on "online community").

Special Considerations About Smoking and Vaping

- We know that those with lung disease are at increased risk of worse coronavirus infection. Smoking and/or vaping any substance may increase lung irritation and your risk of viral infection.
- Access nicotine treatments (patch, gum, lozenge, inhaler) or other medications to help reduce smoking and vaping.
 - You can access Connecticut Quitline at www.quitnow.net/connecticut or 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

Travel

- You should limit all travel, including travel to even nearby places.
- Most cities have made suggestions about not traveling.
- If you need to travel, make sure you have enough medication or can get a treatment provider where you are headed.

Age and Other Medical Conditions

- Age over 60 puts people at increased risk of getting coronavirus infection and increased risk of severe infection if they get it.
- Certain medical conditions (heart disease; diabetes; lung diseases like COPD, bronchitis, emphysema, and asthma; kidney disease; high blood pressure; cancer) place patients at increased risk.
- Work with your clinicians to be sure these health conditions are being treated.
- You should be sure to have all of your vaccinations (immunizations) including influenza ("flu shot"), tetanus, hepatitis A and B, and pneumonia, as appropriate.

Where to Find Information About Coronavirus

Monitor your state and local health department website and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Coronavirus website for the latest information.

- Connecticut Department of Health Coronavirus Website: <https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus>
- Yale New Haven Health Coronavirus Website: <https://www.ynhhs.org/patient-care/covid-19.aspx>

Where to Find Information About Coronavirus *continued*

- Hartford Healthcare Coronavirus Website: <https://hartfordhealthcare.org/health-wellness/coronavirus>

Additional Information

Additional information on safer drug use:

<https://harmreduction.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/COVID19-safer-drug-use-1.pdf>

Find syringe service programs in Connecticut:

https://www.211ct.org/search?terms=syringe&page=1&location=ct&service_area=connecticut

For patients living with HIV:

<https://www.hiv.gov/hiv-basics/living-well-with-hiv/taking-care-of-yourself/emergencies-and-disasters>

Coping with stress during infectious disease outbreaks:

<https://store.samhsa.gov/system/files/sma14-4885.pdf>

Taking care of your mental health during infectious disease outbreaks:

<https://store.samhsa.gov/system/files/sma14-4894.pdf>