



COVID-19 Myth Busters

Important Information for Patients

Most patients with liver disease have general questions about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Like you, as providers, we have been bombarded with information. We understand how hard it is to sort out the facts—especially when you're stressed! For these reasons, we have compiled a list of common myths we've heard and some scientific facts to help keep you informed.

COVID-19 Transmission

MYTH: Going to the doctor's office will give you COVID-19.

FACT: If you have a medical condition, it is important to continue to have regularly scheduled medical visits. Speak with your provider before you cancel or delay any appointments or procedures. Many providers are offering video or phone visits; precautions are taken to ensure safe procedures that are medically necessary.

MYTH: Hot or cold climates affect the spread of COVID-19.

FACT: COVID-19 can spread in any climate. You can protect yourself from COVID-19 with physical distancing (at least 6 feet), frequent handwashing or using a hand sanitizer, and face coverings. **Note:** All hand sanitizers are NOT safe and effective. Please follow the Food and Drug Administration's guidance at <https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/safely-using-hand-sanitizer>.

MYTH: Flies and mosquitoes spread COVID-19.

FACT: Flies and mosquitoes are not known to transmit COVID-19. The virus is spread through respiratory droplets from coughing, sneezing, or talking. You can become infected by touching a contaminated surface and then touching your eyes, nose, or mouth before washing your hands.

MYTH: You must be with someone who has COVID-19 for 10 minutes to catch the virus.

FACT: Although the risk of catching the virus increases the longer you are with someone who is infected, there is no set amount of time. The virus can be spread when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks.

Reducing COVID-19 Transmission

MYTH: Hand dryers kill COVID-19.

FACT: Hand dryers do not kill COVID-19. To protect yourself against the virus, you should frequently wash your hands with soap and water or use a hand sanitizer.

MYTH: Wearing a face covering reduces oxygen and causes CO² intoxication.

FACT: In the majority of people, a properly fitting face covering does not reduce oxygen or cause CO² intoxication. Some people, such as those with breathing problems (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease [COPD], for example), may not be able to wear a face covering, but these people are the minority.

MYTH: People should wear face coverings while exercising.

FACT: Sweat can cause the face covering to become wet quickly, making it difficult to breathe. During exercise, you don't need to wear a face covering, but be sure to maintain a physical distance of at least 6 feet from others.

MYTH: A face covering exemption card is available for certain people.

FACT: Any card that claims to exempt a person from wearing a face covering is fake.

MYTH: A daily saline rinse will provide protection against COVID-19.

FACT: No studies have proven that saline rinse will keep you from getting COVID-19.

Detecting COVID-19

MYTH: Thermal scanners or thermometers detect COVID-19 in your body.

FACT: Thermal scanners and thermometers cannot detect COVID-19. They can only detect a fever.

COVID-19 Symptoms

MYTH: Holding your breath for 10 seconds without coughing means you do not have COVID-19.

FACT: The only way to confirm if you have the virus is by taking a laboratory test.

MYTH: Diarrhea and vomiting are not signs of COVID-19.

FACT: COVID-19 causes many symptoms, including diarrhea and vomiting. If you have liver disease, any abrupt change in your health should prompt a call to your doctor.

Severity/Prognosis of COVID-19

MYTH: COVID-19 is no more serious than the regular flu.

FACT: The fatality rate of COVID-19 is many times higher than the flu.

MYTH: COVID-19 stays in your body for life.

FACT: Catching COVID-19 does not mean you have it for life, and most people recover.

MYTH: Children don't get a serious case of COVID-19.

FACT: Children who have underlying health conditions may have a severe case of COVID-19. COVID-19-related multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C) can be serious. This syndrome affects different body parts, including the heart, lungs, kidneys, brain, skin, eyes, and gastrointestinal tract. Most children diagnosed with this condition get better with medical care.

Treatment of COVID-19

MYTH: COVID-19 can be cured with antibiotics.

FACT: Viruses do not respond to antibiotics. Antibiotics are only useful if you develop a bacterial infection that is a complication of COVID-19.

MYTH: The COVID-19 vaccination will make you sick.

FACT: Your health care provider will provide safe recommendations regarding the vaccine when it becomes available.

MYTH: Drinking alcohol prevents COVID-19.

FACT: Drinking alcohol is dangerous and can alter your immune system. Ingestion of alcohol provides no protection against COVID-19. However, hand sanitizers help prevent the spread of infection.

MYTH: Alcohol and bleach can prevent or cure COVID-19.

FACT: Alcohol (ethanol, or ethyl alcohol) and bleach are used in some cleaning agents. Diluted bleach or alcohol can only be used to clean surfaces and should never be ingested, as they can damage your internal organs.

Supply Chain/Shortages During the Pandemic

MYTH: I should reduce my medication in case the pandemic causes a shortage.

FACT: Continue taking all medications as prescribed by your doctor, and contact your pharmacist or medical team if you experience an emergency. Make sure your prescriptions are up-to-date and you have several months of medications on hand.

Liver Transplant Medicines and COVID-19

MYTH: Liver transplant antirejection medications prevent COVID-19.

FACT: Antirejection medications do not protect against contracting COVID-19, and you must continue to take them as prescribed during the pandemic.

Hepatitis C and COVID-19

MYTH: Hepatitis C treatment cures COVID-19.

FACT: There are currently no drugs licensed for the treatment of COVID-19. If you are infected with COVID-19, you should receive care for symptoms as recommended by your medical team.

MYTH: Hepatitis C treatment should be delayed during COVID-19.

FACT: If you are currently being treated for hepatitis C, you should continue taking your medications as prescribed. If you are preparing to start treatment, you should discuss the timing of therapy with your provider.

MYTH: Shoes help spread COVID-19.

FACT: There is very little chance of COVID-19 being spread on shoes. Just to be on the safe side, you may consider leaving your shoes at the entrance of your home if infants and small children play on the floor.

MYTH: Packages shipped from overseas can give you COVID-19.

FACT: Items shipped from overseas usually travel for several days, so transmission should not occur.