

PFF GUIDANCE ON COVID-19

December 18, 2023 – UPDATED*

The Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation medical team continues to monitor the [COVID-19](#) coronavirus pandemic to evaluate the potential health implications for the pulmonary fibrosis (PF) community in the [U.S.](#)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has identified certain groups that are at higher risk for developing serious illness from COVID-19 if they become infected. These include individuals with severe chronic medical conditions, compromised immune systems and those who are elderly.

People living with PF are considered higher risk and should take special precautions to prevent respiratory infections, such as COVID-19, [influenza](#), and other pulmonary pathogens, and limit complications. The CDC's guidelines for people at higher risk are available [here](#).

If you develop symptoms or think you have been exposed to COVID-19, take a [viral test](#) at home, in a laboratory, or at a testing site. **Contact your healthcare provider if you test positive for COVID-19.** Do not go to your local emergency room for a COVID-19 test only.

Prevention

SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19 illness, has changed many times since it emerged in 2019. The CDC recommends the 2023-2024 updated COVID-19 vaccines made by Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, or Novovax, to protect against serious illness from COVID-19.

Additional preventive actions include:

- Improving indoor ventilation
- Getting tested for COVID-19 if you have symptoms or if you have been exposed
- Staying home if you have suspected or confirmed COVID-19
- Seeking treatment if you have COVID-19 and are at risk of getting very sick
- Avoiding contact with people who have suspected or confirmed COVID-19

Free at-home COVID-19 tests are available by mail at [COVIDtests.gov](#).

Lung transplant recipients and people taking medications to suppress their immune systems may have a lower immune response to the COVID-19 vaccine. Therefore, everyone who has a moderately or severely compromised immune system needs at least one dose of the 2023-2024 updated COVID-19 vaccine. You may need more than one dose, [depending on the number of doses you've previously received](#). Talk to your doctor about getting additional doses of an updated COVID-19 vaccine and any medication adjustments around the time of vaccination.

Treatments

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has authorized and approved [COVID-19 treatments](#) for patients experiencing symptoms at home, in the hospital, and for individuals who are at high risk for serious complications from COVID-19.

If you test positive for COVID-19, you should be evaluated for antiviral treatment as soon as possible. Learn about the [Test to Treat](#) initiative which aims to help people quickly access treatments for COVID-19 at little to no cost.

Information

Stay informed by visiting the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [website](#), the [PFF's COVID-19 Resources](#), and following instructions from your local public health officials.