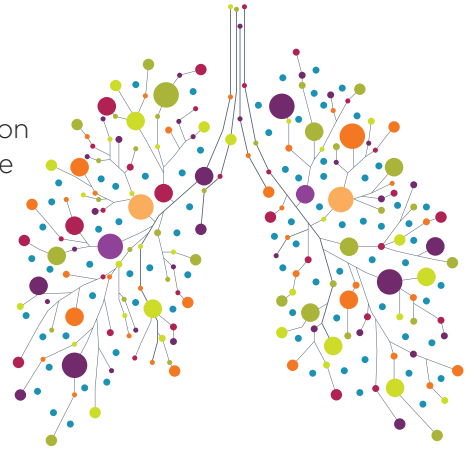


# We at the Division of Pulmonary, Allergy, and Critical Care Medicine are committed to our patients.

We understand that our patients may be feeling anxious, fearful, and frustrated in these uncertain times. Many doctors share these same feelings. We want our patients to have the latest and best available information about COVID-19 so they can confidently make the best health choices, especially about their lung health.

## Connecting the Dots

We as doctors and scientists gather the latest medical research and information from experts across the world. We use our knowledge and experience to make sense of all this information to update the way we care for our patients. We then take the latest of what we've learned and turn it into usable information for our patients to make the best decisions for themselves and their families. Though this can be challenging for us because the very large body of knowledge is continually growing and changing at a very fast rate, we are committed to giving you the best and latest advice.



## Learning and Sharing

Doctors and researchers within our department are continually reading, reviewing, and making sense of what we're learning every day. Many of our doctors are also involved with or are leading research teams to help answer critical questions about COVID-19. We are here to give you our advice based on "filtering" the good and useful information from the not-so-good or unhelpful information.

As your health care provider, we are dedicated to increasing education about COVID-19 and providing you with the most accurate and reliable information possible. As doctors and researchers, our goal is to help our patients receive trusted medical information. We are here to support you and answer any questions you may have. Visit [UPMC.com/Coronavirus](https://www.upmc.com/coronavirus) for the latest information and updates about COVID-19.

## Key Facts about COVID-19

Here is some important COVID-19 information we want you to be aware of:

**Fact:** Face coverings reduce the likelihood of the virus spreading from person to person. Early in the pandemic (March 2020), there was concern about wearing face coverings in public. We did not know whether they would be effective, and experts were nervous that hospitals would run out of masks. We've since seen additional evidence that proves that face masks are very important and help to reduce the spread of COVID-19. That's why it's very important to be smart and wear a face covering when around others.

**Fact:** Face coverings do not make lung/breathing problems worse. Yes, it can be uncomfortable to wear a mask and wearing a mask can cause anxiety. But face coverings will not affect your oxygen or carbon dioxide levels. They will not have an effect on lung conditions like asthma, COPD, or pulmonary fibrosis. Face coverings will not affect your lung condition in any way, other than to protect your mouth and nose from the outside world.

**MYTH:**

Facemasks can cause harm to my health.

**FACT:**

Facemasks do not cause harm.

*Continued*

Education is key and it's important to speak with your doctor about any questions or concerns you have.

Like you, many of us increasingly rely on online news sources for information. While it's great to stay informed, you need to be careful about the type of information you are reading as there is incorrect and false information available online. Check with your doctor before making any decisions regarding your care.

## Recommended COVID-19 Best Practices:

The basic 'must-do's' to protect you and others:

**Physical distancing:** Sharing the same air with another person puts you at risk for breathing in small droplets that contain the virus. When you stay six feet apart from others the risk of breathing in those particles is much, much less.

**Face coverings:** Face coverings reduce spreading the droplets that come from the mouth and nose. The coverings decrease the chance the virus will be spread from one person to another. However, they are not 100 percent effective, and even with masks, there is a small chance of breathing in virus droplets from other people.

**Handwashing:** Handwashing is proven to limit the spread of infections. Altogether, the combination of physical distancing, face coverings, and handwashing can significantly decrease the person-to-person spread of COVID-19.



In the fight against COVID-19, we can all do our part.  
**Here's how you can help.**

-   
**Wash your hands thoroughly and often**
-   
**Keep your distance** when you're in public
-   
**Cover your nose and mouth** when in public
-   
**Follow your local health guidelines**

## We're Here for You

Our offices are open for appointments — in person or by video. You can call **412-648-6161** to schedule an appointment. If you have a MyUPMC account, you can also reach out to your doctor through this application.

**Help Spread the Message:** We as doctors want to give our patients the right information to do their part in learning to live with COVID-19. The more information we all have, the safer we will all be. Please use this message from the doctors and researchers in the Division of Pulmonary, Allergy, and Critical Care Medicine to make smart choices. Please visit [UPMC.com/PulmonaryCareDuringCOVID](https://UPMC.com/PulmonaryCareDuringCOVID) to learn more and share the message on social media.