

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 try to stay away from others. If you are sick or have any of the symptoms listed above, tell your clinician and/or 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 programs can use telehealth, including the telephone, to reach you in a way that protects your privacy.
- Methadone treatment programs 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.
- Bottle delivery may become an option at some methadone treatment programs in the future.
- 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.
- Patients who are quarantined with coronavirus infection can designate an uninfected person to pick up and deliver their methadone or, if necessary, the program may be able to provide for "doorstep" delivery using an approved lock box.
- Methadone treatment programs 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 in advance.

Starting or Changing Medication(s):

- Don't delay treatment. Starting buprenorphine at home is an option for some patients and may work for you.

Starting or Changing Medication(s) continued:

- Some patients may be able to switch to a long acting version of their medication (monthly injections of buprenorphine or naltrexone) or a buprenorphine implant, which may help ensure continued treatment.
- If you are already receiving monthly injectable medications you should stay in touch with your clinician regarding scheduled appointments. 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

Resources listed here are for information-sharing purposes only and should not be considered direct endorsements.

- Work with your clinicians to identify alternatives to in-person (including group) visits.
 - This may include telephone or telehealth (also called "telemedicine") options.
- Some meetings (AA, NA) may be cancelled or have limited attendance.
- Patients with CT Medicaid can request a peer mentor at 877-552-8247 or www.ctbhp.com.
- 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 for online or digital support groups and resources.
 - Free, noncommercial online options include:
 - CT Narcotics Anonymous (NA): <https://ctna.org/find-a-meeting/virtual-meetings/>
 - Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) Intergroup: <http://aa-intergroup.org/>
 - Cocaine Anonymous (CA) Intergroup: <https://ca.org/meetings/>
 - Marijuana Anonymous (MA): <https://ma-online.org>
 - Smart Recovery: www.smartrecovery.org, click on "online community"
 - InTheRooms: <http://intherooms.org>
 - LifeRing (Secular Recovery): <https://www.lifering.org/online-meetings>
 - DynamiCare: <https://www.dynamicarehealth.com/news/2020/3/16/free-daily-online-recovery-support-meetings>
 - Two commercial options, which may require fees or in-app purchases, include:
 - Headspace: <https://www.headspace.com>
 - Connections (Chess Health): <https://www.chess.health/download/>
(requires the participation of your clinician)
 - You can explore more options by visiting <https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/virtual-recovery-resources.pdf>

Special Considerations About Smoking and Vaping

- 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.
- Talk to your clinician about accessing 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.

Travel *continued*

- 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 (also called 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.

- CDC Coronavirus Website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- 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>
- Hartford Healthcare Coronavirus Website: <https://hartfordhealthcare.org/health-wellness/coronavirus>
- Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services Coronavirus Website: <https://portal.ct.gov/DMHAS/Newsorthy/News-Items/DMHAS-Response-to-COVID-19>

Additional Information

Additional information on safer drug use:

<https://yale.app.box.com/v/COVID19HarmReductionGuidance>

<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>

<https://aidsinfo.nih.gov/guidelines/html/8/covid-19-and-persons-with-hiv--interim-guidance-/0>

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>