



Guidelines for Immunocompromised Patients

Adapted from Tufts Medical Center Infectious Disease Department

Below is the advice for transplant recipients adapted from Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the American Transplant Society recommendations. The advice also applies to patients on immunosuppressive and biologic medications, including those prescribed by dermatology, oncology, rheumatology and gastroenterology.

The following recommendations are relevant to all patients:

- Hand washing remains the most important prevention measure; wash your hands well with soap and water for at least 20 second or use hand sanitizer, especially before eating and before/after using the bathroom.
- Avoid touching your face including your eyes, mouth and nose.
- Cough and sneeze etiquette should be practiced (coughing or sneezing into a tissue which is then thrown away or coughing into the crook of one's arm).
- Do not go to work/school/religious or social activities while ill. This is critical. Keep a distance (6 feet) from anyone who is coughing, appears ill, etc.
- Get your flu vaccine and ensure that all your family members have as well. We still have high levels of influenza in circulating and > 16,000 adults have died so far this year
- The use of masks is not recommended by the CDC or WHO unless one is ill or is caring for someone who is ill.

Travel restrictions

There are patients with COVID-19 in 53 countries. There is widespread or sustained community transmission in China, Iran, Italy, Japan and South Korea. We currently recommend that any immunocompromised patients do not travel to these areas. If living in these areas, they should try to avoid crowds. The level of risk varies by country and area. Travel restriction recommendations are likely to change over time. Check frequently for updated recommendations:

- CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>
- WHO: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/travel-advice>

In general, it is best to postpone nonessential travel, particularly to countries where access to medical care may be limited. We also suggest immunocompromised patients' immediate household contacts not travel to areas that are considered high risk.

Medication availability

Some drug shortages have been reported and are expected, based on the country of origin for each component of a drug. It is recommended that patients prepare for interruptions in availability by obtaining a 30-day supply of critical medicines to have on hand. Please note, however, not all health insurance companies will cover this cost. Please encourage patients NOT to stop or change any of medications, including immunosuppressive medications, unless instructed by the prescribing physician.

For the most up-to-date COVID-19 information please visit:

[Centers for Disease Control](#) * [Massachusetts Department of Public Health](#) * [New England Quality Care Alliance](#)