

# Arthritis and COVID-19

(coronavirus)

If you have rheumatoid arthritis or psoriatic arthritis and use immunosuppressant medication, the most important thing you can do is to follow your care plan and attend regular appointments with your health management team. Here are some ways to keep yourself healthy.

## Look after your arthritis health



Take your medications as prescribed by your doctor.



Do not stop any medications unless advised by your doctor.



Do not introduce new medications or supplements unless advised by your doctor.



Ensure that you refill your prescriptions from your pharmacist 10-14 days prior to your current supply of medicines being exhausted. Check with your pharmacist to find out how many repeats you have left and whether you need your doctor to provide a new script. There is no need to stockpile.



If you have any concerns, phone your GP or specialist as soon as possible to make sure you are prepared and updated with the latest information.



If you need to go to hospital, take your medications with you.



Make sure all your vaccinations are up to date.



Be active. Reduce long periods of sitting. Go up and down stairs as much as you can and use household work such as gardening and cleaning to be more physically active.



If you live alone, make arrangements to have a family member, friend or neighbour to be available when you need help.



# Keep safe from COVID-19

(coronavirus)



Wash your hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a hand sanitiser.



Cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue. Throw the tissue away immediately.



Follow the latest regulations for your state.



If you are 70 years or older you should stay at home as much as possible.



Stay more than 1.5 metres away from other people at all times, even when visiting others.



If you are sick stay at home.



If you have symptoms such as cough, sore/scratchy throat, shortness of breath or fever you should be tested for COVID-19. Call your GP or visit a public COVID-19 testing clinic.



If you have serious symptoms such as difficulty breathing, call 000 for an ambulance.

## New telehealth medical services:

To reduce the spread of COVID-19, many doctors now provide bulk billed telehealth appointments (video or telephone). Call your doctor's office to find out about your medical appointment options.

## Keep up to date with the Australian Government's response to COVID-19

For more information call the National Coronavirus Health Information Line on **1800 020 080**.

For a free telephone interpreter ring **131 450**, say the language you need. Ask the interpreter to connect you to the Coronavirus Health Information line.



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Working together for good health and wellbeing

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