



Dear Scripps Clinic Rheumatology Patient,

As cases of the new coronavirus (COVID-19) have increased in San Diego County, we understand you may have questions and concerns. COVID-19 symptoms can range from very mild flu-like illness to severe pneumonia. Symptoms can include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Newer evidence suggests that some are completely without symptoms and recover uneventfully.

The most important things you can do is clean your hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds or hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, and be certain you are current on all your appropriate vaccinations (seasonal influenza, pneumonia, pertussis, and shingles). Further recommendations for high risk individuals can be found at [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

Patients who have autoimmune disease have altered immune systems. Use of certain medications (listed below) suppresses the immune system (which is necessary to treat autoimmune disease) but which increases the risk of having a severe infection. **We strongly recommend that you NOT stop your immune suppressing medication if you are feeling well.**

Out of an abundance of caution, if you develop symptoms concerning for a viral infection, we are recommending those of you on the following medications hold your medication temporarily and let your doctor know. Remember the flu and other viral illnesses are still common this time of year. When your symptoms resolve, please resume your medications.

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| - Abatacept (Orencia) | - Leflunomide (Arava) |
| - Adalimumab (Humira) | - Methotrexate (Trexall) |
| - Azathioprine (Imuran) | - Rituximab (Rituxan) |
| - Barctinib (Olumiant) | - Sarilumab (Kevzara) |
| - Belimumab (Benlysta) | - Sekukinumab (Cosentyx) |
| - Certolizumab (Cimzia) | - Sulfasalazine |
| - Etanercept (Enbrel) | - Tocilizumab (Actemra) |
| - Golimumab (Simponi) | - Tofacitinib (Xeljanz) |
| - Infliximab (Remicade) | - Upadacitinib (Rinvoq) |
| - Ixekizumab (Taltz) | - Ustekinumab (Stelara) |

Patients on mycophenolate mofetil (CellCept or Myfortic) and prednisone should continue their medications and call their rheumatologist for advice.

You may safely continue to take hydroxychloroquine (Plaquenil) and apremilast (Otezla).

We are here to help you get through this difficulty time. For more details and the latest updates, visit scripps.org/covid19.

Division of Rheumatology
Scripps Clinic