

# COVID-19: Guidance for Clinicians with Underlying Medical Conditions

## Consensus Statement from the Intercorporate COVID-19 Collaboration Group

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As the COVID-19 pandemic progresses, we recognize that this is causing personal concern about your own risk and the risk your job may create for your family. The need has arisen for guidance for our clinicians with underlying medical conditions that may place them at increased risk for more serious disease should they become infected with the SARS-COV-2 virus. We have developed these guidelines based on a thorough review of the existing COVID-19 literature in order to provide the best recommendations to keep you safe. These conditions include but are not limited to:

Cardiovascular disease
Uncontrolled diabetes
Hypertension
Chronic respiratory disease
Underlying malignancy
Immunocompromised
Pregnancy

Clinicians in this category can continue to work in their normal capacity exercising the highest level hygiene and personal protection. These are the same measures that we have been recommending for all of our clinicians based on the most current CDC and WHO information. We understand the concerns some individuals may have about providing direct care to patients with known COVID-19. We suggest these individuals talk to their medical director or direct supervisor about these concerns. We recognize that these may be difficult conversations and are here to help provide support and guidance as needed.

The following observations will hopefully help to provide some perspective on the perceived and the clearly understood level of risk:

1. Data from the [Report of the WHO-China Joint Mission on Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#) indicates; “As opposed to Influenza A(H1N1), pregnant women do not appear to be at higher risk of severe disease.” While there is a relative paucity of data, there is no evidence of direct correlation with preterm labor and no evidence of maternal-fetal transmission or of transmission of the virus from breastfeeding.
2. Any increased risk of severe disease, does not mean increased risk of contracting the virus. By using proper PPE, your risk of contracting the disease should be no higher than that of the general public.
3. Overwhelmingly, clinicians in China who contracted the disease were exposed in the community, not through a healthcare setting. Your work environment is the most controlled environment to protect yourself other than self isolation at home.
4. When possible, limit clinician exposure during higher risk aerosol-generating procedures.

Thank you for all you do caring for our patients. We are doing everything in our power to advocate for appropriate PPE on the state, federal and local hospital level. Without our full complement of providers, our healthcare system will not be sustainable through this pandemic. Your patients, your colleagues and your communities rely on you. So, please protect yourself by masking yourself and masking any patients with influenza-like illness (ILI) or severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) symptoms and take extra precaution with patients known to have the COVID-19 disease.

We will continue to research the latest information and update these recommendations as the science changes.

