



communication

Dear Member,

You must manage your chronic condition to improve your outcomes

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted people all over the world, but those with chronic medical conditions have found themselves disproportionately affected. An underlying chronic disease may put individuals at higher risk for complications from COVID-19.

The National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) points out that the elderly and those with certain co-morbidities have been found to be at a higher risk of severe illness and death associated with COVID-19. As a result, anyone living with a chronic condition has been forced to exercise extreme caution when it comes to COVID-19.

Currently there is limited data and information about the impact of many underlying medical conditions on the risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Based on what we know at this time, adults of any age with the following conditions might be at an increased risk for severe illness from the virus that causes COVID-19:

- Heart disease which includes high blood pressure
- Chronic respiratory diseases such as Asthma or Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- Cancer patients
- Endocrine diseases which would include diabetes

Staying healthy during the pandemic is important and vaccination is a preventative measure that we can take towards this goal. It is particularly significant for those at increased risk of severe illness, including older adults, to receive the COVID-19 vaccination once eligible in line with the national rollout plan. Another recommended preventative measure is the flu vaccine which does not protect against COVID-19 infection but as we approach winter will benefit against flu. Remember to ensure a two week period between receiving an influenza vaccination and a COVID-19 vaccination.

Talk with your healthcare provider about other preventive services like cancer screening and also remember the importance of adhering to your prescribed chronic medication. Staying physically active and practicing healthy habits will also help to cope with high stress levels during this time.

Disclaimer: Please take note that the information relating to COVID-19 is rapidly evolving as new information is made available - the information being provided is current as at this point in time.

Kind regards,



<https://www.nicd.ac.za/diseases-a-z-index/covid-19/frequently-asked-questions/>