



March 18, 2020

Community Update Regarding COVID-19

Dear Friends of HDSA,

Like you, we are trying to navigate information and assess risks for our loved ones. The question of whether having HD puts someone at increased risk for complications from COVID-19 is top of mind right now, and like most things related to this virus, there's much we don't know. We asked our experts and Dr. Victor Sung, Chair-Elect of HDSA's Board of Trustees and Director of the HDSA Center of Excellence at the University of Alabama-Birmingham, provided the following guidance:

"Having HD does not make a person immunocompromised or at increased risk for contracting COVID-19 more than another person of the same age. However, persons with advanced HD and swallowing problems/aspiration risks would have an increased risk of developing pulmonary complications of COVID-19 if they contracted it. This is similar to if a person with advanced HD were to contract influenza (flu). So, there is no need for special precautions with HD, and we would just advise the social distancing and handwashing that are being recommended universally."

Most importantly, work with your personal clinician and continue to follow the guidance of our friends at the Centers of Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), World Health Organization (WHO) and your state and local health departments.

If you have additional questions or concerns related to HDSA's work during this public health crisis, please contact your HDSA team member or write to us at info@hdsa.org. Thank you all for hard work and concern during this difficult time.

Please take care of one another, and be safe.

Sincerely,

Louise Vetter
President & CEO
Huntington's Disease Society of America