

Inhaler use up during coronavirus pandemic

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Daily use of inhaler medication by Americans with asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) has increased during the coronavirus pandemic, a new study shows.

Researchers analyzed data on controller inhaler use by nearly 7,600 patients who use Propeller Health, which uses electronic [medication](#) monitors to track inhaler use and alerts patients about missed doses.

Between the first seven days of January 2020 and the last seven days of March, mean daily controller inhaler use rose 14.5%.

During the last week of March, more than 53% of patients had 75% or greater daily controller medication [adherence](#), up 14.9% from the first seven days of January, according to the study published May 4 in *The Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology: In Practice*.

"We are encouraged by the increase in patient adherence to their medications for asthma and COPD, which is critical to avoiding symptoms and keeping patients out of the hospital during this [pandemic](#)," said first author Leanne Kaye, a senior research manager at Propeller Health at the time of the study.

Increases in daily controller medication adherence increases were seen in all age groups, with older patients overall showing higher adherence at the start of the study period. There were no significant statistical differences in improved medication use between asthma and COPD patients.

"This research further supports that digital health tools can improve adherence and provide insight into patient well-being between office visits," Kaye said in a journal news release.

The improved use of controller medication seen in the study may be due to coronavirus pandemic guidelines about medication use, as well as patients wanting to keep their respiratory diseases under control during the pandemic, according to the researchers.

Daily [controller](#) medications are essential for patients with asthma, COPD and other chronic respiratory conditions, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, the study authors noted.

Controlling these [respiratory diseases](#) with proper medication use can improve outcomes and reduce problems that require medical care, which could inadvertently expose a patient to COVID-19, they explained.

More information: The American Lung Association has more on [asthma medication](#).

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