

# Most immunosuppressive meds not tied to worse COVID-19 outcomes

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(HealthDay)—Overall, people taking immunosuppressive medications

do not have a higher risk for dying from COVID-19 or being put on a ventilator compared with nonimmunosuppressed hospitalized COVID-19 patients, according to a study published online online Nov. 15 in *The Lancet Rheumatology*.

Kathleen M. Andersen, from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, and colleagues used data from the National COVID Cohort Collaborative to evaluate whether individuals taking long-term immunosuppressive medications had worse outcomes when hospitalized with COVID-19 versus nonimmunosuppressed individuals. The analysis included 222,575 patients hospitalized for COVID-19 between Jan. 1, 2020, and June 11, 2021, within 42 [health systems](#) with propensity matching between 12,841 immunosuppressed patients and 29,386 nonimmunosuppressed patients.

The researchers found that 7 percent of patients had long-term immunosuppression with medications for diverse conditions, including rheumatological disease (33 percent), solid organ transplant (26 percent), or cancer (22 percent). In the [propensity score](#)-matched cohort, immunosuppression was associated with a [reduced risk](#) for invasive ventilation (hazard ratio [HR], 0.89). There was no overall association between long-term immunosuppression and the risk for in-hospital death. Further, none of the 15 medication classes examined were associated with an increased risk for invasive mechanical ventilation. For most drugs, there was no statistically significant association with in-hospital death, but increased risks were observed with rituximab for rheumatological disease (HR, 1.72) and for cancer (HR, 2.57).

"In general, people taking [immunosuppressive medications](#) may be reassured that they can safely continue to do so during this pandemic," Andersen said in a statement.

Several authors disclosed financial ties to pharmaceutical and medical

device companies.

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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