People who manage their asthma can improve their chances against COVID-19
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Roughly 25 million Americans have asthma, a potentially serious respiratory condition in the face of widespread COVID transmission. The asthma numbers equal about 1 in 13 Americans, including 8% of adults and 7% of children.

The USC/Kaiser Permanente collaboration gave researchers a chance to evaluate the impact of breathing disorders on COVID outcomes in a population with equal access to health care.

Researchers collected data on 61,338 COVID-19 patients using electronic medical records from Kaiser Permanente Southern California from March 1 to Aug. 31, 2020. The mean age was 43.9; 54% were women and 66% had Hispanic race/ethnicity.

Medical codes were used to determine if these patients had asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease prior to their COVID-19 diagnosis. Researchers also separated the data further, with the “active” group accounting for any patients who had a clinical visit for asthma within the last 12 months and the “inactive” group accounting for those who had not.

A total of 2,751 patients were in the inactive asthma group versus 2,775 in the active group. Additionally, 820 patients had a history of COPD. Patients in the active asthma group had significantly higher odds of hospitalization, a need for intensive respiratory support and ICU admission within 30 days of COVID-19 diagnosis compared to those with no history of asthma or COPD.

A history of COPD was associated with a higher risk of hospitalization, need for intensive respiratory support and death within 60 days from COVID-19. Notably, researchers did not see a higher likelihood of mortality within 60 days for the active asthma group.

"This study went beyond examining asthma's impact on COVID-19 outcomes and instead focused on how COVID-19 outcomes might change..."
for asthma patients depending on their level of asthma control," said study author Anny H. Xiang of the Kaiser Permanente Southern California Department of Research & Evaluation.

"We also saw that even in patients with active asthma, if they were using asthma medications their odds of worsened COVID-19 outcomes decreased, which demonstrates just how important these medications are."


Provided by University of Southern California

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