

Many of us will be well enough, if we come down with coronavirus/COVID-19, to get better at home. However, if you have been diagnosed with (via positive test or suspected by a healthcare practitioner) or are recovering from coronavirus/COVID-19, use of a nebulizer may increase the risk of transmission to others near you, like housemates, when and shortly after you use your machine. The risk of transmission occurs during use, as well as shortly after, as the virus may persist in droplets in the air for up to several hours after you turn off your nebulizer.

Use your nebulizer in an isolated room to minimize exposure to non-infected members of your household. Best locations for a nebulizer treatment are a porch, patio, or in a garage – where air is not recirculating throughout your home. Others should stay out of the room while you are conducting a breathing treatment with your nebulizer, as well as for three hours after you stop using your machine. After nebulizer use, disinfect surfaces in the area, such as tables, nightstands, door handles, and the machine, tubing, and mask/mouth piece. Ideally, select a location with less furniture and surfaces to minimize places on which virus-containing droplets can land.

If the size or layout of your home makes it difficult for housemates to stay away while you use your nebulizer, it may make sense to temporarily stop using your nebulizer to deliver respiratory medications and to use a metered dose inhaler with a spacer instead (such as for albuterol). Please discuss this with a member of AVH Surgical Associates' Pulmonology Clinic or with your primary healthcare provider before stopping nebulized medications.

Please also remember that, if you have had a known contact with the coronavirus/COVID-19 and are in self-quarantine, you should consider yourself contagious until the 14-day quarantine period is over.

If you have any questions or need help deciding whether or not to continue to use nebulized medications, please contact the Pulmonology Clinic of AVH Surgical Associates, at (603) 752-2300. We continue to be available by phone and to conduct office visits via both telephone and video conference.

Thank you,

Peggy Simon, MD, FCCP
AVH Surgical Associates