

## Message to the Canadian Bleeding Disorder Community Related to COVID-19

The Canadian Hemophilia Society has been following the rapidly evolving COVID-19 crisis. We recognize that people with bleeding disorders and their caregivers may have questions related to their health care and treatment products.

### SAFETY OF FACTOR CONCENTRATES

Coronaviruses similar to COVID-19—like SARS and MERS—have been well studied over the last 15 years. It has been clearly shown that the viral inactivation processes used for plasma derivatives, including plasma-derived factor concentrates, eliminate coronaviruses. Factor products continue to be safe.

### SUPPLY OF FACTOR CONCENTRATES, NON-FACTOR THERAPIES

Since the start of the COVID-19 epidemic in January, the CHS has been in contact with the World Federation of Hemophilia regarding the supply of factor products and non-factor therapies. We have been informed that manufacturers currently foresee no interruption to the normal supply of medicines or administration supplies. CHS is in regular contact with Canadian Blood Services and Héma-Québec to closely follow the supply situation in Canada and are told that inventory is normal.

### HOME INVENTORY OF FACTOR CONCENTRATES, NON-FACTOR THERAPIES

Public health authorities are regularly updating guidelines on “social distancing.” These instructions include staying at home as much as possible and avoiding crowds. Many hospitals are advising that people postpone non-urgent visits. These public health measures raise questions around home inventory of factor concentrates, non-factor therapies and other prescribed medications. **CHS recommends that you contact your Bleeding Disorder Treatment Centre directly if you have questions.** Questions might include:

- Should I maintain a minimum inventory (for example, a 2- or 3-week minimum supply) in case I need to self-isolate or self-quarantine at home? Should this also apply to other coagulation products such as DDAVP and antifibrinolytics?
- Should I increase my maximum inventory (for example, a 2-month supply) so I can limit my visits to the hospital? **Important: Do not hoard large quantities; this could create shortages.**
- What is the best way to pick up inventory while maintaining “social distance”?
- What should I do if I need urgent care?
- Will my regular assessment be temporarily postponed until after the crisis?

While in-person visits to your Treatment Centre may be reduced during this time, MyCBDR and iCHIP users can take advantage of these tools to report all their bleeds and infusions to their care teams in real time, thereby maintaining strong communications.



## OTHER HEALTH NEEDS

Some of the same questions apply to other health conditions and other prescription medications (for example, HIV medicines). Contact the prescribing physician or health clinic for guidance.

## PUBLIC HEALTH RECOMMENDATIONS

The Public Health Agency of Canada states that there is an increased risk of more severe outcomes from COVID-19 for Canadians:

- aged 65 and over
- with compromised immune systems
- with underlying medical conditions (cardiovascular disease, diabetes and kidney injury).

**CHS urges people to closely follow the recommendations of federal and provincial public health authorities to reduce risk to you and your family.**

## BLOOD, PLATELET AND PLASMA DONATION

Continuing to donate blood, platelets and plasma is critical at a time when many people who normally donate are urged to stay home to avoid exposure to COVID-19 or to protect others. Both Canadian Blood Services and Héma-Québec remind us that:

- It's safe to donate blood, platelets and plasma during the COVID-19 epidemic.
- Donations are critical for patients.
- Blood donors should book and keep their appointments to prevent shortages.

**The CHS will make update you via our various communication channels if and when necessary.**