

# COVID-19 and Your Health

COVID-19 is a new disease caused by a novel strain of coronavirus, and may pose particular health risks for individuals who use certain substances.

## Substance Users with Increased Risk

- Tobacco/Nicotine users.
- Cannabis users.
- Opioid (prescription pain medications, heroin) users.

Since COVID-19 attacks the lungs, individuals who smoke or vape tobacco/nicotine or cannabis may be at higher risk for progression and adverse outcomes if infected. Use of these substances can also lower immune functioning, making risk of infection higher. Additionally, individuals who use opioids (prescription pain medications), may have lower respiratory and pulmonary functioning and could be at increased risk for negative outcomes of COVID-19<sup>1</sup>.

## Substance Use Safety

- **If able, avoid using substances.** Substance use can impact physical and mental health, which may be vulnerable during this time.
- **If you are using a substance, do not share paraphernalia** (e-cigs, cigarettes, pipes, etc.) with others as this can increase risk of transmitting COVID-19.
- **If you use opioids or have a friend or family member who uses,** have naloxone (also called Narcan) available in case of overdose.
- **Naloxone is available without a prescription at most pharmacies** and can be paid for out of pocket or with insurance.

## Resources for Substance Use

If you are in recovery or are hoping to quit substance use, below is a list of resources:

- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA):** [samhsa.gov](https://www.samhsa.gov) or the National Helpline at 1-800-662-4357
- **SMART Recovery:** [smartrecovery.org](https://www.smartrecovery.org)
- **Alcoholics Anonymous:** [aa.org](https://www.aa.org)
- **Narcotics Anonymous:** [na.org](https://www.na.org)
- **Connections App** (free download, chatting with counselors, tracking sobriety): [addictionpolicy.org/connections-app](https://addictionpolicy.org/connections-app) to receive a download link
- **Become an Ex (quitting tobacco/nicotine):** [becomeanex.org](https://www.becomeanex.org)
- **Medication Assisted Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder - SAMHSA:** [samhsa.gov/medication-assisted-treatment](https://www.samhsa.gov/medication-assisted-treatment)

## COVID-19

- **Centers for Disease Control:** [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV)

For more updates, check out our website at [pip.missouri.edu](https://pip.missouri.edu) and find us on social media [@missouripip](https://twitter.com/missouripip)



1. National Institute on Drug Abuse. COVID-19: Potential Implications for Individuals with Substance Use Disorders. March 24 2020.