Dear Patient:

We understand your concern about the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and have had a number of patients reach out with questions and concerns about what this means for yourself and your family members. In response, we have drafted the following guidelines for our patients on immunosuppressive medication. At Brigham and Women's Hospital Dermatology, those immunosuppressive medications most commonly include: prednisone, methotrexate, rituximab, cyclosporine, mycophenolate mofetil (Cellcept), azathioprine (Imuran), and biologic medications (including for example, Humira, Enbrel, Remicaide, Cosentyx, Taltz, Stelara, Cimzia, Simponi, Skyrizi, Xeljanz).

There is currently no data on the influence of these medications on COVID-19.  ?In general, we would recommend continuing your therapy as prescribed unless you have concern for an active infection or fever or are concerned that you may have been exposed to a sick contact (then please call our clinic as well as your PCP).

However, we are recommending that our patients on immunosuppressive medication follow the following general recommendations:

Limit any unnecessary travel per CDC guidelines.

Hand hygiene, with frequent and effective hand washing, is critical, along with avoidance of touching your face (eyes, nose, mouth).  If soap and water are not readily available, you can use an alcohol-based hand saniter with at least 60% alcohol.  Please be sure to wash your hands particularly before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

Avoid those who are ill, especially those who are coughing and sneezing. At this time, wearing of masks by uninfected individuals is not encouraged because it may provide a false sense of security. However, those suspected of having COVID-19 should wear masks to prevent transmission. Washing potentially infected surfaces with specific anti-viral hospital-grade disinfectants may limit spread of the virus.

Vaccinate with the flu vaccine if you have not done so already.

If you have any symptoms of infection, particularly fever, cough, or shortness of breath, discontinue your medication and call your physician (dermatologist and primary care physician).

If you know that you have been exposed to COVID-19, please discontinue your medication and call your physician (dermatologist and primary care physician).  Please call your doctor's office first if you are feeling unwell for guidance before making an appointment to come in to be seen in person.

If you have specific questions about your specific medical situation, please contact our office.

Please be aware that the situation around COVID-19 is changing daily, and new information is constantly emerging which may change our medication management. Please stay abreast of current information and contact our office with specific concerns or questions.

We would like to direct you to the following resources:

<https://www.rheumatology.org/Announcements>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Best,