COVID-19 Statement

Thank you for your question about COVID-19 infection and risks for patients with Homocystinurias. I do not anticipate that individuals with Homocystinurias will suffer any greater risk of being infected with COVID-19 virus than anyone else. If you were to be infected then your complication risk and symptoms will probably be similar to the general population.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has published guidance stating that individuals with inborn errors of metabolism might be at greater risk from COVID-19 than other individuals. The reason for this and homocystinuria is that your homocysteine is likely to increase during an infection. The best defense for this is to remain hydrated, continue your prescribed medications and diet (if prescribed).

COVID-19 is a serious disease. Everyone should obey whatever restrictions and guidelines are being recommended where they live. The most important things are to wash your hands frequently and if ill, particularly with fever, cough, vomiting, or diarrhea, isolate oneself at home and contact your primary care physician (and your metabolic providers) about how to be evaluated clinically, change your regimen and potentially tested for COVID-19. If you’re feeling more severely ill, such as shortness of breath, then contact 911.

The most important thing to do with regards to homocystinurias and the system disruptions that are likely to occur in the next few weeks is to make certain that you have ordered and obtained at least one month’s supply of medical food or medication.

A short list of things you can do to prepare for COVID-19 as well as generally for any mass infection or disaster.

1. **Appropriate hand washing is essential.** Practice washing your hands with your child using soap and scrubbing for at least 20 seconds (take this time to sing the ABCs out loud together). Here is a link to the CDCs information on handwashing: https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html

2. Try to have at least 1-2 weeks’ worth of specialty medications and formula on hand. Even if something does not affect you in your immediate area, it is good to be prepared for delays in shipments.

Of note, insurance may not allow for an on-hand stock of medication, in this case, work with your metabolic clinic to develop an emergency plan for medication stocks.

For those on a metabolic dietary formula, consider building a stock that can cover 1-2 weeks. This will help you from running out (because we often forget to order things regularly).

3. In the event of a disaster it is a good idea to have extra food/water/juice on hand if something were to happen and you are unable to get to a grocery store for one week.

4. Some things you should keep in your pantry. A. Families with kids > 1 year of age can stock sugar and Gatorade. Powdered Gatorade (or equivalent) is preferred, as it can be reconstituted in bulk into a large volume as needed. However, pre-made Gatorade is ok too. (1 tablespoon of sugar into 20 oz of gatorade makes a solution that is ~10% dextrose)

   B. Families with kids < 1 year of age should stock pedialyte instead for rehydration, as gatorade may result in an osmotic diarrhea

   C. Families should also stock antipyretics, tylenol preferred over ibuprofen, given the recent (low-evidence) concerns regarding NSAIDs in COVID

5. If you have planned travel outside of the US please be aware of travel warnings from the CDC. These are updated daily and can be found here: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html