

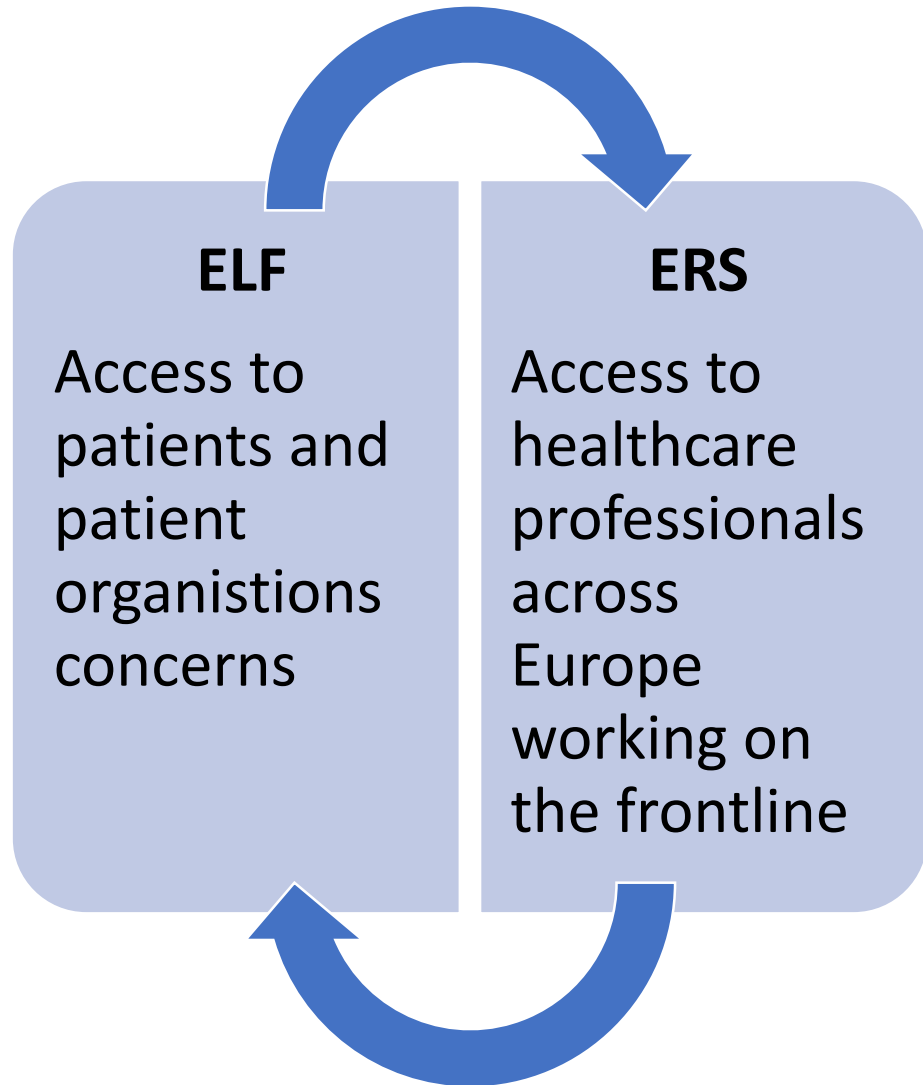


## Protection of people with underlying lung conditions

EU Health Policy Platform – ELF Chair-Elect Kjeld Hansen

**“Bringing together patients and the public with respiratory professionals to positively influence lung health”**

# Advantages of ELF/ERS relationship



=



# THE SUNDAY TIMES

## NOT GOING OUT

### YOUR SURVIVAL GUIDE TO SELF-ISOLATION

THE BEST PODCASTS, FILMS, SERIES, BOOKS, STREAMING AND RADIO CULTURE

GET THE SUNDAY TIMES ON YOUR DOORSTEP

## FREE HOME DELIVERY FOR 12 WEEKS

SEE OFFER ON PAGE 22

# Stay home alone to save your life, 1.5m warned

### GPs send letters to those most at risk as Johnson enlists 20,000 private hospital staff

The epidemic, Andrew Gregory and Jonathan Leman

More than a million people must stay at home for the next several weeks to help to contain the virus, the government has warned. The letter, which is being sent to 1.5 million people, is the most direct appeal yet for people to stay at home. It is the first time the government has asked people to stay at home for so long. The letter is being sent to 1.5 million people, including those who are most at risk of dying from the virus. It is the first time the government has asked people to stay at home for so long. The letter is being sent to 1.5 million people, including those who are most at risk of dying from the virus.

...to save lives together... it is to stay at home for the next several weeks to help to contain the virus, the government has warned. The letter, which is being sent to 1.5 million people, is the most direct appeal yet for people to stay at home. It is the first time the government has asked people to stay at home for so long. The letter is being sent to 1.5 million people, including those who are most at risk of dying from the virus.



David Cross goes to lower his lambs in the spring sunshine in Meltham Church, East Yorkshire.

### Even in wartime, nobody dared to do this



David Smith

What would you do if your country was at war? In 1940, when the Luftwaffe was bombing London, many people hid in their homes. But in 1940, when the Luftwaffe was bombing London, many people hid in their homes. But in 1940, when the Luftwaffe was bombing London, many people hid in their homes.

### Exposed: the doctor who got £2.5m in a week from 'virus tests'

INSIGHT

A private doctor has made £2.5m in two weeks by performing thousands of private coronavirus tests for his patients. The doctor, who is based in London, has been accused of charging £200 for each test. The doctor, who is based in London, has been accused of charging £200 for each test.

...the doctor who got £2.5m in a week from 'virus tests'... A private doctor has made £2.5m in two weeks by performing thousands of private coronavirus tests for his patients. The doctor, who is based in London, has been accused of charging £200 for each test. The doctor, who is based in London, has been accused of charging £200 for each test.

### Mo Farah caught up in doping inquiry row

BEST PLACES TO LIVE 2020

THE 10 BEST PLACES TO LIVE 2020

DO YOU KNOW YOUR CITY? DON'T MISS YOUR FIVE-STAR RESUME

Mo Farah

The Olympic champion has been caught up in a row over doping allegations. The athlete, who is based in London, has been accused of using performance-enhancing drugs. The athlete, who is based in London, has been accused of using performance-enhancing drugs.

SPORT

Mo Farah

The Olympic champion has been caught up in a row over doping allegations. The athlete, who is based in London, has been accused of using performance-enhancing drugs. The athlete, who is based in London, has been accused of using performance-enhancing drugs.

## EL PAÍS



Materia

### LA CRISIS DEL CORONAVIRUS >

# Por qué el coronavirus es más peligroso para los ancianos

## La forma en la que envejece el sistema inmunitario es la razón por la que el virus se ceba especialmente en los mayores de 70 años

The article discusses how the aging process of the immune system makes older people more vulnerable to the coronavirus. It explains that as people age, their immune system becomes less effective at fighting off infections. This is why the virus is particularly dangerous for those over 70 years old.



# What does this mean for people with lung conditions?



“... my rights as a citizen are not protected as part of the vulnerable population to the coronavirus epidemic, as I have a respiratory pre-existing condition. To calm the general public, politicians state that people should not be alarmed because the virus is only fatal to the elderly and patients with pre-existing conditions. This statement is very concerning for the vulnerable population... We have been left behind and addressed as if we are expendable because the majority of the population will survive... **It is not fair to ask any person to take this risk with no protection and gracefully accept getting ill or die because of being part of a minority.**”

1. Reiterating official health advice (governments, WHO, ECDC)

2. Providing reassuring information (practical advice, handwashing)

3. Getting patient questions answered by professionals

# 1. Reiterating official health advice

31.03.2020

## COVID-19 – YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED BY A RESPIRATORY EXPERT

We took your questions and spoke with an infectious diseases expert from the European Respiratory Society (ERS), Professor James Chalmers [1] and intensive care specialist, Professor Leo Heunks. This will give you up-to-date and respiratory-specific information about COVID-19. If you have any other respiratory health questions relating to the outbreak please get in touch [info@europeanlung.org](mailto:info@europeanlung.org)



In many cases, the advice for people with lung conditions is the same regardless of condition. Because of this, unless the question clearly states a specific disease, the advice applies to multiple conditions.

### Summary of advice for people with lung conditions

- Ensure you have enough supplies in the house for a few weeks, in case you become unwell or need to self-isolate. This includes food, medications and household items.
- Keep away from others who are sick, both when inside and outside, and ask anyone who has symptoms not to visit.
- Avoid crowds or large gatherings.
- Avoid cruise travel and non-essential air travel.
- Practice regular hand hygiene by washing with warm water and soap for 20 seconds at a time.
- Do not touch your mouth, nose and eyes with unwashed hands.
- Keep up with your regular treatments.
- If COVID-19 levels are high in your locality, stay at home as much as possible.

## 2. Providing reassuring information

**Even if you have an  
underlying condition you are  
still likely to get mild  
symptoms**





# 3. Answering >400 questions from patients



- Am I more likely to get COVID-19? Will a healthy person receive better treatment?
- Am I more likely to die from COVID-19?
- How can I tell COVID symptoms compared to my normal symptoms?
- Will my normal treatment protect me from COVID-19?
- Can I catch COVID-19 from my asthma inhaler? Should I stop taking steroids for my asthma?
- Should I stay in / should I wear a mask?
- I can't afford not to work but should I stop for my health?

Asthma:

**Are people with asthma more likely to experience severe complications and require ventilation?**

So far, we do not have any evidence that asthma patients are having severe complications with COVID-19. In the UK, the first report of intensive care unit admitted patients was released in mid-March and of 196 patients, only three had severe underlying lung conditions. This is lower than we would expect and suggests that most of the people being admitted with severe complications are not currently patients with lung conditions.

**Are people with asthma who have had COVID-19 recovering?**

Yes. So far there have been very few cases of severe COVID-19 infections in people with asthma and those that have been infected are recovering.

**I have asthma and use my preventer inhaler. I know this has steroids and I've been told that this can make COVID-19 symptoms worse. What should I do?**

What you have been told is wrong. Patients with asthma should never stop taking their preventer inhaler unless asked to do so by a medical professional. Stopping your steroid inhaler could put you at higher risk of complications with COVID-19 due to making your asthma worse. There is currently no reason to think that steroids make COVID-19 worse and research from China suggests steroids may make COVID-19 less severe. A UK trial is currently testing whether steroids work as a treatment here.

**Are patients who are using anti-IL5 treatments or similar, that reduce eosinophils, at higher risk? Should they stop or modify dosages?**

Do not stop or modify any of your asthma medications because of concern about COVID-19. There is a risk that doing that could make your asthma control worse, causing you to need medical treatment or hospital admission.

Anti-IL-5 should have no effect on the risk of getting COVID-19, and keeping taking it could theoretically reduce the risk of an asthma attack if you were to contract the virus.

# Patients still have to live with their lung conditions



- Regular clinic visits not able to take place
- Lung transplants getting cancelled
- Lung cancer treatment not getting started
- Less staff available when someone has an asthma attack
- Risk of infection if a patient needs to go to hospital
- Patients not able to receive treatment for other conditions
- Exercise is important to manage many lung conditions but many patients fear leaving the house

# Q and A resource for people with lung conditions



- Q and A on ELF website

<https://www.europeanlung.org/en/QA-covid-19>

- Questions from patients and answered by respiratory professionals
- Available in: French, German, Italian, Spanish, Polish, Russian, Turkish, Portuguese, Greek, Persian
- Updated weekly
- >150,000 visits in 2 weeks

[www.europeanlung.org](http://www.europeanlung.org) / [@europeanlung](https://twitter.com/europeanlung)  
[Kjeld.Hansen@europeanlung.org](mailto:Kjeld.Hansen@europeanlung.org)

The screenshot shows the ELF website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the ELF logo and the text 'EUROPEAN LUNG FOUNDATION'. A search bar and a 'DONATE' button are also visible. Below the navigation bar, there is a main banner for 'COVID-19' with the text 'YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED BY A RESPIRATORY EXPERT' and a 'FIND OUT MORE' button. The banner features an image of a woman sitting on a bed, looking thoughtful. Below the banner, there is a 'GET INVOLVED' button and a section for the 'EPAP' (European Patient Ambassador Programme) with the text 'Do you or does someone you care for have a chronic condition? Develop the skills and knowledge you may need to represent yourself or others through the European Patient Ambassador Programme.' At the bottom, there are four featured topics: 'COVID-19', 'PATIENT ORGANISATIONS', 'AIR TRAVEL', and 'GET INVOLVED', each with a small image and a brief description.



ERS

**Other information and resources available from the  
European Respiratory Society**

# COVID-19: information and resources



## COMMUNITY FORUM

A dedicated space for ERS members and the wider healthcare community to connect, discuss and share your experiences of COVID-19. Sign in with your myERS details and join a discussion.

[JOIN THE DISCUSSION](#)



## IN THE LINE OF DUTY

Healthcare workers on the front lines share their stories of treating and managing COVID-19.

[MORE](#)



## WEBINARS

Expert-led webinars that provide updates on the management of COVID-19 in China, clinical consequences, epidemiology and research potential.

[MORE](#)

# COVID-19: information and resources



## PUBLICATIONS

The latest articles from ERS publications on SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19. All articles are available via open access.

[MORE](#)



## RESEARCH SUMMARIES

ERS Respiratory Digests provide summaries of new and significant research, including important early COVID-19 publications.

[MORE](#)