

Common concerns in managing bronchial asthma during the COVID-19 pandemic

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Dear Editor,

The use of corticosteroids and nebulised bronchodilators in bronchial asthma (BA) is a major concern during the COVID-19 pandemic. Inhaled corticosteroid (ICS) is the recommended treatment for all levels of BA severity, while oral corticosteroid (OCS) is used in severe asthma and acute exacerbation of BA (AEBA).¹ Because corticosteroid is an immunosuppressant, BA patients on corticosteroid treatment are theoretically at a higher risk of contracting COVID-19 and may suffer more severe disease. Nebulisation of bronchodilators is a frequent treatment modality for patients attending an emergency department for AEBA because of a common perception that it is more effective and faster in symptom relief. However, nebulisation may cause dispersion of SARS-CoV-2 into the surrounding environment, putting other patients and