



## Coronavirus and Diabetes

### Moroccan League for the Fight against Diabetes Member of the Internationale Diabetes Federation

**COVID-19** (COVID stands for the disease: COronaVirus SARS CoV-2 Infectious Disease) is a new global pandemic according to the WHO.

It is considered to be a very contagious viral disease since an infected person can infect at least 2 to 3 people (while the number is around 1 for influenza). Despite the large number of people who are or will be affected, **more than 80% of the forms are mildly or moderately symptomatic**, especially among children who can carry the disease and thus participate in the fast spread of the disease. Severe forms represent 10 to 15% of all forms and in only 5% a stay in the intensive care is necessary with a survival rate then situated at around 50%.

However, when a disease is very contagious and affects a lot of people, as is the case with the coronavirus, 5% of serious cases can represent a considerable number of patients to be transferred to the intensive care, which can quickly exceed the medical capabilities of a country. In fact, the spread and the occurrence of these cases can overburden health system worldwide. Therefore, strict containment and isolation measures are applied in most countries.

All diabetics, regardless of the type of diabetes and their treatment, are at risk of becoming infected with the Coronavirus.

The objective of this update is to inform diabetics and their families about the risks and the necessary precautions.

### Practical advice for persons with diabetes

- Adopt the strict rules of containment and sanitary isolation advised to everyone
- Adopt the rules of hygiene recommended for everyone: frequent hand washing with soap, hydroalcoholic gel ...

- Adopt specific additional rules related to diabetes and its treatment.

## **Most affected diabetics**

- Elderly and / or poorly balanced persons with diabetes
- Diabetics with high blood pressure and cardiovascular and / or renal complications

## **What are the risks ?**

- Higher risks:
  - diabetes decompensation
  - secondary infection
  - severe respiratory complications
  - mortality

## **What precautions should be taken?**

- Continue your dietary hygiene with balanced food intake
- Do physical activity at home
- Continue your prescribed treatment to better balance your diabetes
- Have the necessary medicines in sufficient quantity for at least 3 to 4 weeks
- Continue other treatments, in particular antihypertensive drugs (CEI or sartan, etc.)
- Have diabetes monitoring equipment:
  - blood glucose meters, test strips and lancets to measure capillary blood sugar in the context of glycemic self-monitoring
  - Have strips to look for acetone in the urine.
- Do not take anti-inflammatory drugs (except basic treatment)

- Stay in close contact with your general practitioner or specialist: by email, phone, WhatsApp, SMS (not physically!) to have the necessary information and keep him or her informed about your health conditions.
- In case of suspicion or infection (dry cough, fever, fatigue and muscle pain, throat pain with sudden loss of taste and smell ...), blood sugar will rise sharply. **Keep in touch with your doctor** to adjust the treatment and strengthen hygiene and isolation precautions, including wearing a mask while waiting to see progress
- Do not rush into health structures; which would clog them and expose you to the risk of additional contamination.
- Watch for signs of gravity: **respiratory discomfort** with cough and fever which should encourage you to come into contact with the reception structures of COVID-19:

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- In case you are smoking (aggravating situation), take this opportunity to stop smoking
- Regarding your work, check with your employer on how to manage your work options (telework, partial leave, or leave).
- Multiply forms of home entertainment: reading, films and documentaries, artistic activity, painting, embroidery, poetry,...
- Stay connected via social media and messaging apps with your relatives and friends.

Finally and given the general panic generated by the **COVID-19** pandemic, it is crucial to solely consult official and reliable sources of information (Government, Ministry of Health, Institutions academics and scientists) and give no importance to the multiple messages with erroneous, even dangerous information and "fakes news" emanating from the various media and social networks.