



COVID-19 Weekly Bulletin #9

Tuesday, May 26th

We are extending our support by sharing resources through the Sick Cells' Weekly Bulletin to educate and empower the community during this unprecedented time. **#SCDSticksTogether**

SCDAA Health Updates

Follow [SCDAA's Health Alerts](#) to stay regularly informed about COVID-19 and what you need to know as SCD patients and caregivers. The SCDAA medical advisory committee is in constant communication with health authorities and will continue to provide updated recommendations for COVID-19 preparedness. For the provider advisory, click [here](#).

COVID-19 Updates

This section provides the latest information to provide an overview of the outbreak.

- Several states are reporting upticks in new COVID cases, as some other states report steep downward trends or signs of progress. **It is important to [continue monitoring the outbreak in your local areas](#)** and paying attention to state policy responses during this time of regional variation.
- Several states have begun initiating “reopening plans.” **What does this mean for our sickle cell patients?** SCDAA's Medical and Research Advisory Committee issued guidance for economic reopening. Read their recommendations [here](#).
- People with [sickle cell disease are considered a "vulnerable" population](#) during the reopening of the U.S. economy and **need to remain at home as much as possible**.
 - If you are considered part of a “vulnerable” population, **continue to stay at home except for essential trips**.
- Patients with sickle cell disease should **continue to work from home as much as possible**.
 - For those who cannot work from home, it is recommended that special accommodations be available at your workplace (e.g. physical distancing, masks, hand sanitization, etc.).
 - For those which neither of those options is possible, talk with your local sickle cell provider to find an appropriate resolution.
- [Be The Match](#) is now offering **free counseling services** to sickle cell warriors and their loved ones. The pandemic may result in increased stress during this time. Fear and anxiety can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions. One of their licensed social workers can provide you with one-on-one support for personal and emotional issues.
- The [SECURE-SCD Registry](#) is designed to capture pediatric and adult COVID-19 cases that are occurring across the world in patients living with sickle cell disease. Providers caring for these patients are asked to report all cases to this registry. You can review [updated summary information and data](#) from the registry.
- **The American Red Cross needs the help of blood and platelet donors** and blood drive hosts to ensure the health of our communities. Learn more about [COVID-19 and blood donations](#) on their website.



Policy Updates

This section highlights executive orders and legislation in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)** participants will be able to select and pay for their groceries online. Currently, [the SNAP online purchasing pilot](#) is operational in 18 states and the District of Columbia, with additional states going live each week.
- The **Paycheck Protection Program (PPP)** is still underway. If you are a small organization, you can [submit your application](#) today.
- To receive **unemployment benefits**, you need to file a claim with the unemployment program in the state where you worked. [Here's how to get started](#) applying for unemployment benefits in your state.
- [Here are some key things](#) you may need to know about how **student loans** are impacted by the CARES Act.

Sickle Cell Disease Emergency Funds

In this section, we highlight relief funds that may be available to support the community.

- **The Sickle Cell Consortium launched the Sickle Cell Patient & Family COVID-19 Relief Fund.** This is open to sickle cell families that have been impacted by the pandemic. For more information please visit: <http://sicklecellconsortium.org/covid19>
- **NORD launched a Financial Assistance Program for rare disease community members impacted by COVID-19.** Through [the new program](#), NORD will provide financial assistance to eligible patients, covering up to \$1,000 annually. To apply, email COVID19assistance@rarediseases.org.
- **HealthWell has launched a new fund to provide copayment and premium assistance to support the sickle cell community.** Through the fund, HealthWell will provide up to \$10,000 in financial assistance for a 12-month grant period to eligible patients who have annual household incomes up to 500 percent of the federal poverty level. For more information visit HealthWell's [Sickle Cell Disease Fund](#) page.
- **The Sickle Cell Disease Association of America (SCDAA) launched a COVID-19 Emergency Fund** to assist sickle cell non-profit organizations in helping their community members with health care, food insecurity, and other related concerns. Visit the [SCDAA website](#) to learn more.

Wellness Resources

This week we are encouraging you to take regular breaks throughout the day, to increase your levels of productivity and happiness. No matter if you are at home with kids, out of work, or make-shifting your bedroom into an office, taking short breaks is an easy way to boost your emotional health and better manage stress. Here are some ideas for incorporating daily breaks into your routine:

- **Go for a Walk.** Even short little walks can be really good for your physical health, and increase your creativity, too. To ensure safety, keep a distance between yourself and others on the street, and wear a mask if you will be in close contact with other people.



- **Solve a Puzzle.** Puzzles are a great way to relax your brain and take a break from screens. Moreover, adults who solve puzzles have many advantages over those who do not, including improved memory and problem-solving skills.
- **Get Up and Move.** A quick mid-day stretching routine can help reset your body and mind. Try [these 7 stretches](#) when your brain deserves a break.
- **Create Non-Screen Activities for Kids.** There's a bunch of simple but fun activities that you can do with your family as a break. Here is a [list of 100 activities](#) to do around the house that kids will love, too!

What's involved in your quarantine routine? Tag us on socials so we can see!
#SCDSticksTogether #WeeklyBulletin