

source WHO

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“Sickle cell disease (SCD) affects an increasing number of Australians, however without a registry we are unaware of the exact numbers. According to the team of SCD experts at the Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, the major cause of morbidity and mortality in these individuals is acute chest syndrome (ACS) which is the term used for a constellation of findings that includes chest pain, cough, fever, hypoxia (low oxygen level) and lung infiltrates. Acute chest syndrome may be the result of sickling in the small blood vessels, pulmonary infarction/emboli or viral or bacterial pneumonia. They further state that the management of ACS is challenging and requires vigilance from the medical team. “There is a significant concern that the overlap of lung disease from COVID-19, in the setting of sickle cell lungs already primed for and scarred from acute chest syndrome may result in significant complications and amplification of healthcare utilization. Moreover, individuals with sickle cell disease have high utilization of acute care services including emergency departments and hospitals and often present with fever, signs and symptoms of pneumonia or evolving ACS, as well as acute sickle cell pain requiring parenteral therapy. Thus, there may be specific diagnostic, treatment and logistical challenges in meeting the healthcare needs of this population during the COVID-19 pandemic”

The following are some of the Frequently Asked Questions regarding SCD and COVID-19

SOURCES

<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/victorian-public->

https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus#tab=tab_1

[https://www.rch.org.au/rch/Coronavirus_\(COVID-19\)/](https://www.rch.org.au/rch/Coronavirus_(COVID-19)/)

What is coronavirus, COVID-19?

The department of Health website defines coronavirus as a large family of viruses that causes respiratory infections. Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness.

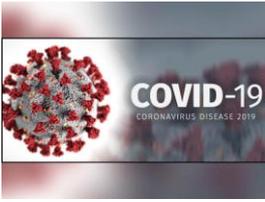
How is coronavirus spread?

Health authorities around the world believe the virus is spread from **close contact** with an infected person, mostly through face-to-face or between members of the same household. People may also pick up the virus from surfaces contaminated by a person with the infection.

The virus is spread by people with symptoms when they cough or sneeze. That’s why the best way to protect others is to practice good personal hygiene.

What are the symptoms of coronavirus? - Common symptoms include:

- fever
- breathing difficulties such as breathlessness
- cough
- sore throat
- fatigue or tiredness
- A lot of difficulty breathing



Where can I get help / information regarding COVID_19.

[For Victoria, visit this link for all information:](#)

[For NSW, visit this link for all information:](#)

[For SA, visit this link for all information:](#)

[For WA, visit this link for all information](#)

[For QLD, visit this link for all information:](#)

[For NT, visit this link for all information](#)

[For TAS, visit this link for all information](#)

[General information from Medicare can be found here](#)

For more resources consider reviewing these recourses:

[If you need to access information in your own language](#)

[More translated resources can be found here](#)

[See the World Health Organisation on this link](#)

[Federal Government app link can be found here](#)

[Consumer Health Forum of Australia](#)

[Woolworths link for Home deliveries to eligible customers](#)

[TeleHealth Medicare Benefit Scheme Item numbers can be found here](#)

[Information on getting your medications delivered home can be found here](#)

[For information from different hospitals go to the websites for these treating hospitals here](#)

[For a simple self-assessment kit see this link](#) (Note this is not medical advice, call your local GP if you are concerned, ignore the contact number on the last page, follow the above states links to know which number to call)

If you are someone living with Sickle Cell Disease and is concerned about anything regarding COVID_19, email us on covid19@aussicklecelladvocacy.org and we will contact your local Haematologists on your behalf.