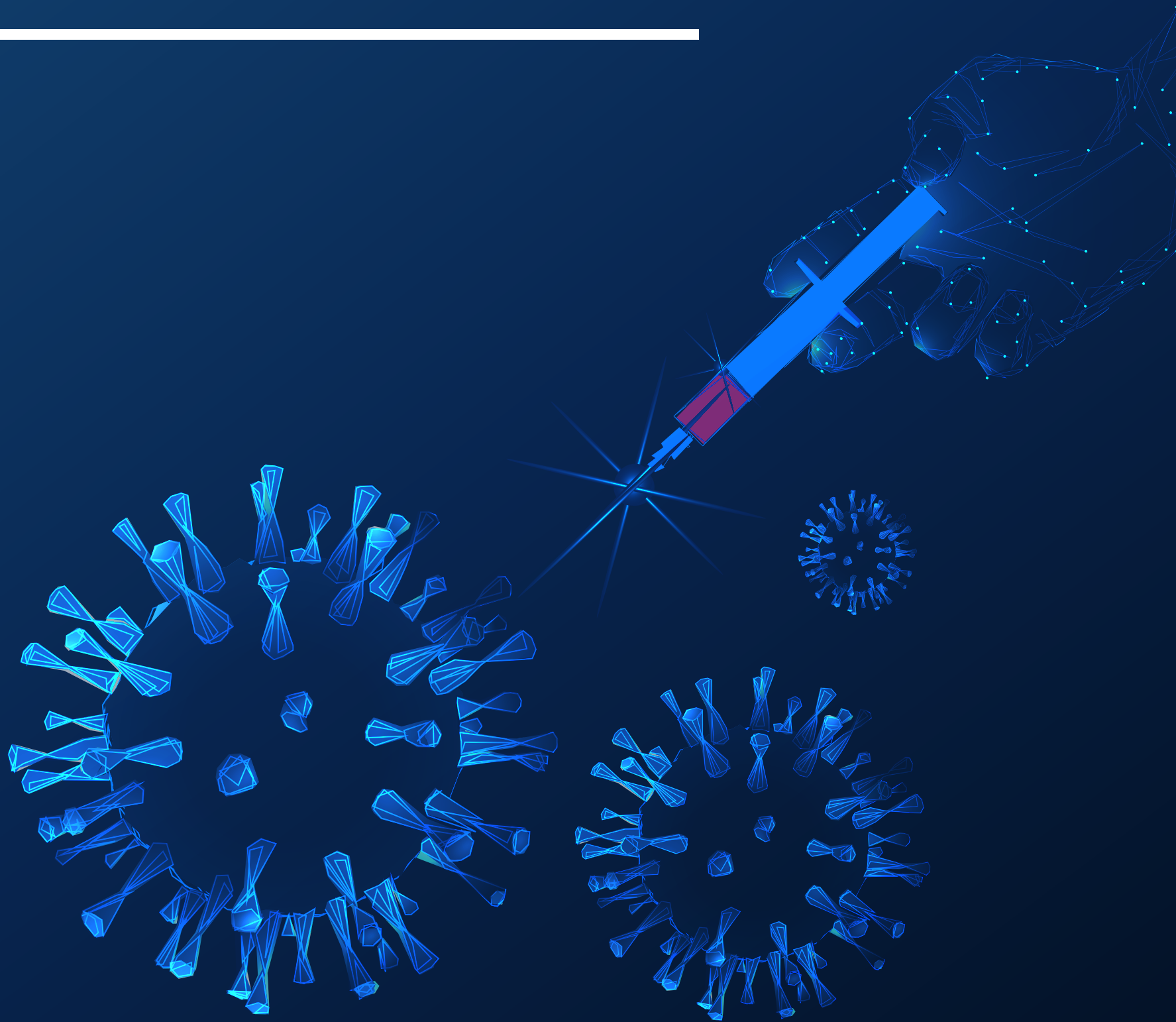


Important information about COVID-19



Insights by:

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Compiled by:

ClearTax

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Reading material shared by Dr. Parinitha Kaza and Dr. Harshith Rao

- [Guide to covid COVID 19 facts, treatment, vaccination \(created by Dr. Parinitha and team\)](#)
- [Video recording of the Zoom call with Dr. Harshith and Dr. Parinitha](#)
- [ClearTax Presentation by Dr. Parinitha](#)
- [WHO published advice to the public \(Videos\)](#)
- [How to wear a fabric mask safely](#)
- [Different types of tests for covid-19](#)
- [Covid-19 completely explained](#)
- [What causes virus to change](#)
- [More on vaccine production](#)
- [More on vaccine side effects](#)
- [Covid-19 variants](#)
- [Usage of masks among children](#)
- [More useful resources \(Google drive folder\)](#)

Prevention

Does COVID spread through air?

Theoretically, yes it spreads through air but the risk of transmission via air is minimal. Majorly, it spreads through droplets which can be stopped through a well-fitted mask, social distancing and by avoiding frequent contact with your face.

If someone has recovered from Covid, will the antibodies protect from infection again?

Immunoglobulins (IgM and IgG) antibodies do develop in people who recover from Covid. However, there have been cases with a history of Covid infection, which means, having an infection in the past does not guarantee absolute protection. However, for some time (unknown), the antibodies do last in the body.

How effective is steam in prevention and cure of Covid-19 infection?

Steam is not a treatment or antiviral in itself. It cannot cure a viral infection. It is only used when you have upper respiratory symptoms such as nasal blockage or excessive nasal dryness in which case for your nose, pharynx and larynx would need humidification.

However, there are harmful effects of excessive use of steam. If steam is taken in a way that you cannot monitor the temperature of heat while inhaling and if your respiratory mucosa is very fragile then there are chances that the high temperature of steam can cause further injury to the already damaged respiratory lining.

So, it is advised that if you have Covid infection, taking too much steam is not recommended as it can harm you. You should take steam only for symptoms that trouble you such as nasal blockage/congestion/dryness/throat irritation etc, by taking it from some distance. Try not to take the hot air directly.

The second wave of Covid has majorly affected people below the age of 45 and it is being speculated that the third wave will affect people below the age of 18 years. Now that vaccination isn't available for people below 18 years of age, what does one do to stay safe from Covid?

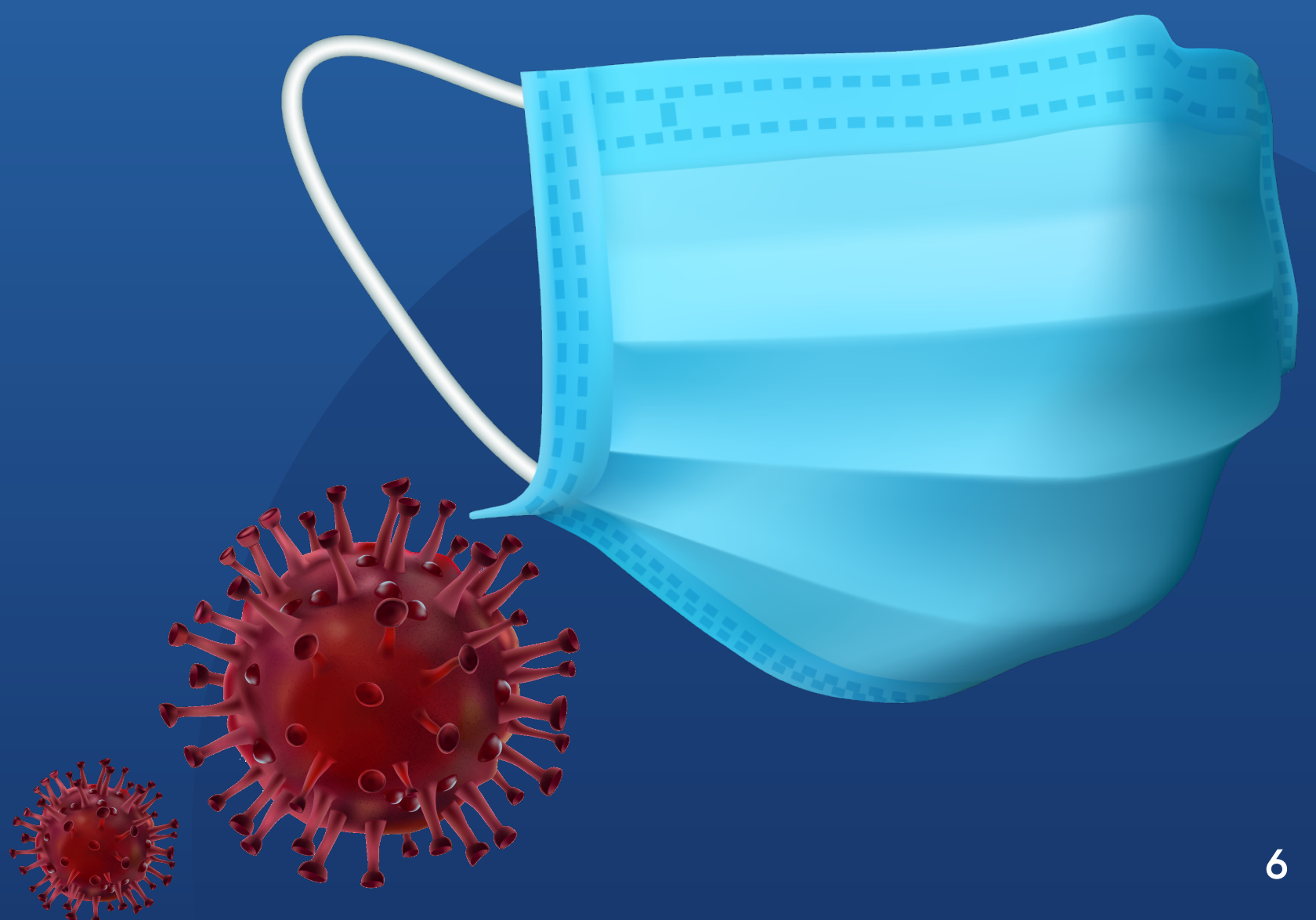
The preventive strategy for adults and kids is the same. To begin with, let us not speculate about the third wave as I am not sure if it is verified by any scientific studies. One good point is, as of now, kids don't have severe disease or infection unless they have prior health conditions such as malnutrition or congenital diseases. Vaccine is not yet available for children but the clinical trials are on. Till then, they can continue to take preventive measures.

Is it safe to get vaccinated before conceiving or after?

Any medical disease is difficult to treat during pregnancy. It is recommended to get vaccinated (both doses) and then plan for pregnancy. Vaccines are not approved for pregnant women as of now. So, a pregnant woman and their baby will be at risk for 9 months.

New variant of the virus, B1.617 is said to be more prone to transmission in vaccinated people. Is it true?

Many new such variants have been detected these days. But I am not sure if this variant is prone to vaccinations because we don't have any such evidence. Treatment remains the same for all variants.



Treatment

Why do symptoms worsen from day 6 to 10 in a person who is seemingly recovering?

Any infection goes through phases and the body reacts to these phases differently.

The first phase is viremia. This is the phase when your body fluids such as blood and interstitial fluids are infected with the virus. This is when you develop fever.

Once fever settles, then the process of recovery starts. This is a crucial step especially for me (or doctors) because most of the severe or moderate conditions get developed during this phase. The hypothesis is, this happens due to some kind of auto-immunity phenomenon that takes place which leads to generation of antibodies. These antibodies fight the virus to clear them off, but sometimes these antibodies attack body tissues instead of the virus leading to tissue or organ damage.

On a separate note, this is why steroids are proven to be useful in severe diseases, because steroids reduce your immunity. This suppressed immunity prevents fatality.

What steps should one take in the first five days to avoid a lung infection?

In the first five days, no one can predict if a patient will end up with a severe infection. However, based on observation of a large population, there are some conditions which can predict severity. For instance, if the person has any kind of lung or heart disease or if they smoke.

Since you cannot predict, you should continue to monitor closely in the initial days using a pulse oximeter and a thermometer and keep checking it 3-5 times a day. Keep checking if the readings are increasing, decreasing or remain stable. This way you can ensure you end up detecting severe conditions early on.

What is the importance and the advantages of proning?

Proning cannot prevent hospitalization. It is proven to increase oxygenation by 2-5 units when during home isolation. For example, your oxygen saturation can increase from 90 to 94. In short, proning helps in increasing oxygen levels and also helps in a better gaseous exchange in lungs.

What is the role of steroids in the treatment of Covid?

In some cases, steroids have been helpful in preventing fatality. But please note, this is only beneficial to moderate to severe cases in which very low levels of oxygen were noticed. If you take steroids during a mild infection, it can harm you or can even be fatal. As explained earlier, this is because steroids work in reducing your immunity. Never self prescribe steroids. Take them only after medical recommendation.

Are there any studies to suggest the efficiency of plasma taken from a recovered Covid patient in the treatment of the infection?

Well, some say yes while others say no.

The role of convalescence in plasma has been observed in many infections.

For instance, rabies. Once one is bitten by a dog and they don't develop immediate antibodies. They take antibodies prescribed for horses so that it can protect them. Plasma therapy does something similar. It is assumed that the blood of a person who has recovered from Covid will have antibodies to fight the virus better. There are multiple studies which prove this beneficial and then there are some that don't.

The studies that find it beneficial are observational. As in, they try it on infected people, which cures them to prove it is effective. That is not great scientific research, I think. Ideally, it should be tried on people who are not infected. (This is called placebo arm). Most of the centers are using it on a trial basis.



Post-Infection Care

Does one still stand the risk of infection even after recovering from Covid? Will antibodies protect them from infection?

It's unsure. It is always advisable to continue wearing a mask while stepping out. We cannot assume anything here. We also recommend vaccinating people who have recovered from infection.

Post Covid, do you recommend any tests to check if any organs have been affected?

Generally, no! Even if one has mild or moderate symptoms.

It depends on how ill one was and which organs were affected. If one's lungs were affected, their doctor or radiologist might suggest a test to check how much of it has recovered .

Nowadays, many hospitals are offering a post-Covid full body health check up. One can do without that. Go for a check-up only if your doctor recommends it.

My father recovered from Covid a few months ago with severe pneumonia. Are there any long-term effects that we should be careful about right now?

Yes, there are many! While doctors have come up with a list, there are two that are particularly relevant in this case. Firstly, the lung which is damaged will take a while to recover. It may take two to four months, based on the age and severity. If your father had severe pneumonia, I would want to know how well his lungs have recovered.

Secondly, there is something called a post-Covid syndrome that can occur even after 3 months. Symptoms of this syndrome can range from cough and body pain.

What should one do if they notice mild redness in their eyes, mild fever (ranging from 99.2 to 99.3) every night after recovery (CRP 1.3)?

It should be fine as long as the oxygen levels remain good. However, I would suggest to take symptomatic treatment like a paracetamol for fever and an anti-taxim for cough while monitoring these symptoms over a course of 4 -5 days. If fever persists or rises, it would be advisable to consult a doctor. Generally, the body takes time to recover. The duration varies from 5 days to even a month. So, don't panic.

What would be an ideal diet and lifestyle for someone who has just recovered from Covid? Is there any particular medication that they should take after recovery?

Diet and lifestyle can be the same as prior to getting infected. No particular diet has shown to have specific side-effects or benefits during the illness. Your diet should be balanced and nutritious enough to be able to fight the virus. In case an individual is malnourished, I would suggest they choose a diet with high protein that will boost their immunity.

In general, there is no specific medication post recovery. If your doctors feel that you still need to regain strength, they might prescribe you some anticoagulants, vitamins or drugs that can help you recover sooner. This is not a standard prescription. It depends on the patient's medical status.

Can I smoke after recovery?

As of now, there is no evidence to suggest that you cannot smoke again as far as COVID is concerned. But as a pulmonologist, I would advise you to quit smoking unless you have symptoms of nicotine withdrawal which needs medical therapy. Get in touch with your medical practitioner and they will help you.

But if you don't have withdrawal symptoms, then I would suggest you quit to lead a healthier life. Your risk of developing COPD or lung cancer decreases drastically once you stop smoking. In the case of Covid, I don't think it matters but as far as your lungs and heart are concerned, yes, you should quit smoking as soon as possible.

How dangerous is the black fungus infection that is being detected in people post COVID-19?

Black fungus has been around for many years. It is a deadly condition and has been detected post recovery in cases of people who were critically ill with Covid and used steroids that reduce immunity. This does not mean steroids are bad. As mentioned earlier, steroids have evidently helped in recovery of critical Covid patients by bringing down the immunity which helps in reducing fatality. Post recovery, such patients should avoid coming in contact with dust after infection for some days. They should also wear a mask after infection when they step outside.

Vaccination

I had tested positive for Covid with mild symptoms and have recovered seven days ago. When can I get vaccinated?

The Government of India recommends you to get vaccinated after 6 to 8 weeks of recovery.

I got vaccinated on the 7th of April and got infected with Covid on the 26th of April. However, I recovered and tested negative on the 12th of May. Is it safe for me to take the second dose of vaccinations now?

Second dose can be taken after 6 to 8 weeks after your clinical recovery. You can get vaccinated once your fever has subsided and you have tested negative for Covid. A delay of 1 to 2 weeks isn't a cause for concern.

If a family member has tested positive for Covid and other members have mild symptoms but never got tested, should they get vaccinated or go for an antibody test before getting their first jab?

In this case, I'm assuming that all the family members had Covid. I wouldn't recommend an antibody test because it will not indicate anything. There is not enough information available to interpret the results. You should get vaccinated after 6 to 8 weeks after your fever subsides.

My brother (19+) is going to take the Covidshield vaccine (first dose) soon. He has been using an inhaler for 17 years now and has a cough and cold at the moment. Is it safe to get vaccinated now?

I'm assuming that your brother is using an inhaler for asthma or COPD. But is the cough and cold recent? If it is, he shouldn't get vaccinated at the moment. In case of acute illnesses, fever, you shouldn't get vaccinated. One must wait for the symptoms to subside before getting jabbed. Also, I'd advise your brother to get tested for Covid. If he tests positive, he can take his first dose after 6 to 8 weeks. And, if he tests negative, he can get vaccinated once the symptoms wear off. He can continue using inhalers if it has been prescribed for particular indications.

Is it safe to take anti-allergy tablets like Allercet or Cetrizine after getting vaccinated?

While there is no harm in taking anti-allergy tablets, taking steroids unnecessarily can reduce the efficiency of the vaccine. Although there is no scientific evidence to prove this yet, any immunomodulatory drug should be avoided because your vaccine increases your immunity.

