



17 March 2020

**A statement on COVID-19 and blood pressure medication (ACE-inhibitors/ARBs)**

The High Blood Pressure Research Council of Australia (HBPRCA) is aware of concerns of a possible link between some blood pressure lowering medications and susceptibility to infection with COVID-19.

It has been suggested that two commonly used blood pressure lowering medicines, **ACE-inhibitors** and **Angiotensin Receptor Blockers (ARBs)**, may increase the risk of infection with COVID-19 or worsen the outcome for those who are infected (1). These theoretical considerations are based on the observation that treatment with either of these medicines may increase the levels of a specific enzyme (ACE-2) which can be used by the coronavirus to infect cells.

The HBPRCA wishes to highlight that there is currently **no clinical evidence** to show that ACE-Inhibitors or ARBs either worsen susceptibility to COVID-19 infection or affect the outcomes of those infected.

**In the absence of data and in view of the documented beneficial health effects of these medicines in patients with elevated blood pressure and other cardiac conditions the HBPRCA recommends that the routine use of ACE-Inhibitors or ARBs should continue and patients should not cease blood pressure lowering medications unless advised to do so by their physician.**

Similar views are shared by major international bodies including the International Society of Hypertension (2), the European Society of Hypertension (3), and the European Society of Cardiology Council on Hypertension (4).

Research efforts regarding the relationships between medicines use and COVID-19 infection are ongoing and updates will be provided as relevant information becomes available.

*On behalf of the HBPRCA Executive Committee*

**References:**

1. Fang L, Karakiulakis G, Roth M. Are patients with hypertension and diabetes mellitus at increased risk for COVID-19 infection? *Lancet Respir Med* 2020; [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2213-2600\(20\)30116-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2213-2600(20)30116-8)
2. Statement by the ISH: <https://ish-world.com/news/a/A-statement-from-the-International-Society-of-Hypertension-on-COVID-19/>
3. Statement by the ESH: <https://www.eshonline.org/spotlights/esh-statement-on-covid-19/>
4. Statement by the ESC: [https://www.escardio.org/Councils/Council-on-Hypertension-\(CHT\)/News/position-statement-of-the-esc-council-on-hypertension-on-ace-inhibitors-and-ang](https://www.escardio.org/Councils/Council-on-Hypertension-(CHT)/News/position-statement-of-the-esc-council-on-hypertension-on-ace-inhibitors-and-ang)