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Welcome to the December Immunodeficiency UK newsletter!



Hello Immunodeficiency UK supporter,

Welcome to our festive edition of our monthly newsletter. Read on for our monthly news round up and, as always, please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions or comments.

Please note that over the Christmas period our helpline and office will be closing on Wednesday 22nd December and reopening on Tuesday 4th January.

We hope you enjoy the Christmas period, however you choose to spend it. A huge thank you for your ongoing support of Immunodeficiency UK this year, we hope 2022 is much kinder to all of us.

With warmest wishes for the festive season,

Susan and Jen

The Immunodeficiency UK Team

Keeping safe at Christmas



Christmas is around the corner and yet again we know that some of you are going to have to make some hard choices again about the how, where, and with whom you spend your Christmas safe from COVID, whilst trying to enjoy the festivities.

With the recent news of the new variant Omicron and cases of Covid rising we understand that your anxiety levels could be high. Our recommendation is to do what is comfortable for you, don't feel pressurised into conforming to other peoples' behaviours. Everyone deals with the risk posed by Covid in their own way, don't go out of your own comfort zone just to please others. Keep yourself safe with social distancing inside and out, avoid closed spaces with lots of people, keep your rooms ventilated, attend gatherings where you feel comfortable, avoid shared food such as dips. Try to make the setting as relaxed and quiet as possible to keep you and your families safe!

Whilst Christmas is thought of as the season to be merry and bright, it can also be a time of loneliness and feelings of being over-whelmed to live up to the huge pressure to have a 'good time'. Due to COVID you may be unable to visit or see your loved ones in the usual way. Many people do find Christmas difficult even in the absence of the worry of COVID; so, do look after your mental wellbeing. If you are spending Christmas alone, have a think about what you want to do beforehand and plan the day doing things that you most enjoy. Just be gentle and easy with yourself. If you are worried, sad, or simply overwhelmed, under pressure about Christmas, don't be afraid to talk to someone about it. Have a chat to someone you trust. Read some useful articles from the [mental health charity MIND](#) on how to cope at Christmas

Accessing care

It is important you know how to access care over the holiday period. People with ongoing active health problems should have a plan from their clinician for accessing care over the longer bank holidays. This may include specific advice in case of worsening health and what the threshold of concern should be in certain circumstances, and who to contact. If you have back up antibiotics you should be given guidance about when to start them again and under what circumstances.

Plan ahead - think about medicines you might need and make sure you have an adequate supply.

Your GP should always first port of call and your immunology centres should have out of hours contact information. In an emergency call 999, if you are unwell but not critical, and need advice, call NHS 111. If you are not sure call 999, and they will triage.

Plan B in England

People in England are being asked to work from home again if possible and face masks will be compulsory in most public places, as part of new rules to limit the spread of Omicron. You can read more about the Government's Plan B [here](#).

Mental Health Webinars in January



January is often tough even at the best of times so to help a little with your mental health and well- being Immunodeficiency UK will be hosting two mental health webinars in the New Year.

These will be early evening sessions on the 13th and 20th January.

The events will be run by Dr Mari Campbell, Clinical Psychologist at the Royal Free and we will be sending out invitations in the first week of January. Meanwhile please do get in touch with us at hello@immunodeficiencyuk.org to let us know what mental health topics you would like Dr Campbell to cover.

MHRA approves access to Sotrovimab

The MHRA has approved the anti-Covid monoclonal antibody treatment (Mab) [Sotrovimab](#). It should be used within five days of someone getting symptoms. [UK approves another antibody treatment for Covid - BBC News](#)

From Immunodeficiency UK: 'This is welcomed good news for our community at an extremely worrying time. We eagerly await the speedy publication of prescribing guidelines so that doctors can make this treatment available to patients in need as soon as possible and we hope that there will not be a repeat of the delay from MHRA approval to access, which we saw with the Mab treatment Ronapreve. Twenty months on from the start of the pandemic and after numerous requests to the Government we have yet to see a medical strategy that offers protection to our community against Covid. That must

Immunodeficiency UK Christmas e-cards

There is still time for you to buy our Christmas e-cards, purchasing our e-cards is a wonderful way to support Immunodeficiency UK and wish your loved ones a Merry Christmas.

By purchasing our e-cards you will be helping to contribute towards raising vital funds and awareness. We have a range of festive designs to choose from, including two new Immunodeficiency UK branded cards.



[Send your e-card](#)

Immunodeficiency UK's Festive Photography Competition



This winter, we'd love to share your most merry and bright photos with our Festive Photography Competition!

The theme this year is '**Merry and Bright**'. This could be anything that inspires you or lifts your spirits in the depths of mid-winter.

To enter, post your photo on facebook or Instagram and tag us @ImmunodeficiencyUK. Alternatively, you can email your picture to Jen at jen.rush@immunodeficiencyuk.org stating that you give permission for us to share your name and photo on our social media channels.

We'll be choosing three winners for the categories **Cheerful**, **Heartwarming** and **Festive**.

The competition is just for fun, but we're sure Santa's helpers will have a little surprise for our category winners!

Entries close on December 13th, when all photos will be added to a Facebook album for the whole community to enjoy.

A gift that makes a difference this Christmas

Give a gift that makes a difference to individuals and families affected by an immunodeficiency this Christmas.

Without your kindness and generosity Immunodeficiency UK would not be able to continue with their vital work, because your donations make a real impact:

- £10 pays for printing and sending out of 3 booklets to someone at diagnosis
- £30 helps pay for 1 hour of our support helpline
- £50 could help fund projects to better support the mental health of our community

You can text **IDUK** to **70085** to donate **£10** to Immunodeficiency UK, (texts will cost the donation amount plus one standard network rate message), or donate online via our website:

[Donate Online](#)

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