



American Heart Association.

EmPOWERED to Serve™

# Managing Your Chronic Conditions During the COVID-19 Pandemic

## LESSON PLAN

### Call to Action

Managing your chronic conditions is always important, but even more so during the COVID-19 pandemic. Underlying conditions such as heart disease, high blood pressure and diabetes disproportionately affect Black and Hispanic/ Latino people. It's important to take control of your health through self-monitoring your conditions at home, going back to see your doctor and getting the COVID-19 vaccine. This lesson is for people who:

- Have or may be at risk for high blood pressure
- Have or may be at risk for diabetes
- Need help to return to their doctors
- Need more information about the COVID-19 vaccine



### Community Need

Nearly half of adults in the U.S. have high blood pressure — a major risk factor for heart attack and stroke and complications from COVID-19. Also, older adults are more likely to have severe illness, with more than 90% of COVID-19-related deaths occurring in people 45 years and older.

### Three Important Points

Our lives are busy. Many of us are on information overload. So, let's focus on three key health messages:

- High blood pressure and diabetes can lead to serious illness from COVID-19.
- Going back to see your doctor, whether in person or virtually, can help manage conditions and is important for overall health.
- The COVID-19 vaccine is a safe and effective way to protect you and those around you.



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### Preparing for the Lesson

- Budget at least 30 minutes to present the lesson.
- Review the speaker notes prior to the lesson to be familiar with the information and know what additional resources are used.
- If handouts are referenced in the presentation, distribute the pages prior to beginning the lesson.
- Additional resources are available in the Resources List PDF. These could be added to lengthen the presentation or provide ideas for small group discussions. You may also provide the Resources List PDF to the attendees so they have links to information discussed in the lesson.

### Program Materials

- **No access to a slide projector?** Print out the slides and put them in a binder. Use the printed slides as a script to deliver your health lesson.
- Flip chart and markers
- Handouts (one copy per participant):
  - Consequences of High Blood Pressure Infographic <http://bit.ly/2OBuGqS>
  - COVID-19 Vaccine Information <https://bit.ly/3DmfmGX>
  - What Is Diabetes and How Can I Manage It? <https://bit.ly/2UQyE5T>
- Pens
- Goody bags (optional): Ask local health organizations such as hospitals, wellness centers and clinics about donating giveaways for participants. Also, check out the American Heart Association online store, [shopheart.org](http://shopheart.org), for giveaways to buy in bulk. for giveaways to buy in bulk.

### Audiovisual Needs

- Projector for PowerPoint slides
- Internet connection (optional)



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### Wrap-Up

Once participants have left, be sure to complete the Ambassador Questionnaire.

### Slide Program with Talking Points and Discussion Questions

- Do you know someone who had/has COVID-19 or is at high risk?
- What are high risk factors for COVID-19?
- Do you think chronic conditions is a health issue for multicultural communities?
- Do you know someone with diabetes or high blood sugar?
- Do you know if diabetes or high blood sugar runs in your family?
- What would you find most difficult to do to control your blood pressure?
- What steps will you take to begin seeing your doctor again?
- How will you EmPOWER yourself to protect against COVID-19?