



COVID-19

To maximize protection from the [Delta variant](#) and prevent possibly spreading it to others, get vaccinated as soon as you can and wear a mask indoors in public if you are in [an area of substantial or high transmission](#).

People with Certain Medical Conditions

Updated Oct. 14, 2021

[Print](#)



This information is intended for a general audience. Healthcare providers should see [Underlying Medical Conditions Associated with Higher Risk for Severe COVID-19](#) for more detailed information.

What You Need To Know

- People of any age with the conditions listed below are more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.
- COVID-19 vaccines (initial doses and boosters) and preventive measures for COVID-19 are important, especially if you are older or have multiple or severe health conditions including those on this list. Approved and authorized COVID-19 vaccines (initial doses and boosters) are safe and effective and should be administered to people at higher risk including [people with underlying medical conditions](#).
- This list does not include all possible conditions that place you at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19. If you have a condition not included here, talk to your doctor about how best to manage your condition and protect yourself from COVID-19.

Overview

People of any age with the following conditions are more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19. Severe illness means that a person with COVID-19 may:

- Be hospitalized
- Need intensive care
- Require a ventilator to help them breathe
- Die

In addition:

- [Older adults](#) are more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19. More than 81% of COVID-19 deaths occur in people over age 65. The number of deaths among people over age 65 is 80 times higher than the number of deaths among people aged 18-29.

- The risk of severe COVID-19 increases as the number of underlying medical conditions increases in a person
- Long-standing systemic health and social inequities have put various groups of people at increased risk of getting sick and dying from COVID-19, including many [people from certain racial and ethnic minority groups](#) and [people with disabilities](#).
 - Studies have shown people from racial and ethnic minority groups are also dying from COVID-19 at younger ages. People in minority groups are often younger when they develop chronic medical conditions and may be more likely to have more than one condition.
 - People with disabilities are more likely than those without disabilities to have [chronic health conditions, live in congregate settings, and face more barriers to healthcare](#). Studies have shown that some people with certain disabilities are more likely to get COVID-19 and have worse outcomes.

COVID-19 vaccination (initial doses and boosters) and preventive measures for COVID-19 are important, especially if you are older or have multiple or severe health conditions. Learn more about CDC’s COVID-19 vaccination recommendations, including how medical conditions and other factors inform recommendations. If you have a medical condition, learn more about [Actions You Can Take](#).

Medical Conditions

- This list is presented in alphabetical order and **not in order of risk**.
- CDC completed an [evidence review process](#) for each medical condition on this list to ensure they met criteria for inclusion on this list. CDC conducts ongoing reviews of additional underlying conditions and some of these conditions might have enough evidence to be added to the list.
- As we are learning more about COVID-19 every day, this list **does not** include all medical conditions that place a person at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19. Rare medical conditions, including many conditions that primarily affect children, may not be included below. The list will be updated as the science evolves.
- A person with a condition that is not listed may still be at greater risk of severe illness from COVID-19 than people of similar age who do not have the condition and **should talk with their healthcare provider**.

Cancer

Having cancer can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19. Treatments for many types of cancer can weaken your body’s ability to fight off disease. At this time, based on available studies, having a history of cancer may increase your risk.

Get more information:

- [Cancer | CDC](#)
- [American Cancer Society: What People with Cancer Should Know about Coronavirus](#) [↗](#)

Chronic kidney disease

Having chronic kidney disease of any stage can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.



Get more information:

- [Chronic kidney disease](#)
- [National Kidney Foundation: Kidney disease and COVID-19](#) [↗](#)

Chronic liver disease

Having chronic liver disease, such as alcohol-related liver disease, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, and autoimmune hepatitis, and especially cirrhosis, or scarring of the liver, can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.

Get more information:


- [Liver Disease | NIDDK \(nih.gov\)](#) 
- [American Liver Foundation: Your Liver & COVID-19](#) 

Chronic lung diseases

Having chronic lung diseases can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19. These chronic lung diseases may include:

- Asthma, if it's moderate to severe
- Bronchiectasis (thickening of the lungs airways)
- Bronchopulmonary dysplasia (chronic lung disease affecting newborns)
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), including emphysema and chronic bronchitis
- Having damaged or scarred lung tissue such as interstitial lung disease (including idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis)
- Cystic fibrosis, with or without lung or other solid organ transplant
- Pulmonary embolism (blood clot in the lungs)
- Pulmonary hypertension (high blood pressure in the lungs)

Get more information:

- [COPD | CDC](#)
- [Asthma | CDC](#)
- [People with Moderate to Severe Asthma | CDC](#)
- [American Lung Association: Controlling Chronic Lung Diseases Amid COVID-19](#) 
- [Cystic Fibrosis | CDC](#)

Dementia or other neurological conditions

Having neurological conditions, such as dementia, can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.

Get more information:

- [Dementia | CDC](#)
- [Alzheimer's Association: COVID-19, Alzheimer's and Dementia](#) 

Diabetes (type 1 or type 2)

Having either type 1 or type 2 diabetes can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.

Get more information:

- [Diabetes | CDC](#)
- [American Diabetes Association: How COVID-19 Impacts People with Diabetes](#) 

Down syndrome

Having Down syndrome can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.

Get more information:

- [Down syndrome | CDC](#)
- [Global Down Syndrome Foundation](#) 
- [National Down Syndrome Society: COVID-19 and Down Syndrome](#) 

Heart conditions

Having heart conditions such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, cardiomyopathies, and possibly high blood pressure (hypertension) can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.

Get more information:

- [Heart Disease | CDC](#)
- [COVID-19 | American Heart Association](#) 

HIV infection

Having HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.

Get more information:

- [HIV Infection | CDC](#)
- [Interim Guidance for COVID-19 and Persons with HIV](#) 




Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system)

Having a weakened immune system can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19. Many conditions and treatments can cause a person to be immunocompromised or have a weakened immune system. Primary immunodeficiency is caused by genetic defects that can be inherited. Prolonged use of corticosteroids or other immune weakening medicines can lead to secondary or acquired immunodeficiency.

People who have a condition or are taking medications that weaken their immune system may not be protected even if they are fully vaccinated. They should continue to take all [precautions recommended for unvaccinated people, including wearing a well-fitted mask](#), until advised otherwise by their healthcare provider.

People with moderately to severely compromised immune systems should [receive an additional dose](#) of mRNA COVID-19 vaccine at least 28 days after the second dose.




Get more information:

- [Types of Primary Immune Deficiency Diseases](#) 
- [The Jeffrey Modell Foundation](#) 
- [Immune Deficiency Foundation](#) 
- [Primary Immunodeficiency \(PI\) | CDC](#)

Mental health conditions

Having mood disorders, including depression, and schizophrenia spectrum disorders can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.


Get more information:

- [NIMH » Shareable Resources on Coping with COVID-19 \(nih.gov\)](#) 
- [NIMH » Depression \(nih.gov\)](#) 
- [Mood Disorders | MentalHealth.gov](#) 

Overweight and obesity

Overweight (defined as a [body mass index](#) (BMI) $> 25 \text{ kg/m}^2$ but $< 30 \text{ kg/m}^2$), obesity (BMI $\geq 30 \text{ kg/m}^2$ but $< 40 \text{ kg/m}^2$), or severe obesity (BMI of $\geq 40 \text{ kg/m}^2$), can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19. The risk of severe COVID-19 illness increases sharply with elevated BMI.

Get more information:

- [Obesity | CDC](#)
- [Obesity, Race/Ethnicity, and COVID-19 | CDC](#)
- [Obesity Action Coalition: COVID-19 and Obesity](#) 

Pregnancy

Pregnant and recently pregnant people (for at least 42 days following end of pregnancy) are more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19 compared with non-pregnant people.

Get more information:

- [Pregnant and Recently Pregnant People | CDC](#)
- [Toolkit for Pregnant People and New Parents | CDC](#)
- [Investigating the Impact of COVID-19 during Pregnancy | CDC](#)

Sickle cell disease or thalassemia

Having hemoglobin blood disorders like sickle cell disease (SCD) or thalassemia can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.

Get more information:

- [Sickle Cell Disease | CDC](#)
- [Thalassemia | CDC](#)

Smoking, current or former

Being a current or former cigarette smoker can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19. If you currently smoke, quit. If you used to smoke, don't start again. If you've never smoked, don't start.

Get more information:

- [Smoking & Tobacco Use | CDC](#)
- [How to Quit Smoking | Quit Smoking | Tips From Former Smokers | CDC](#)
- [Health Benefits of Quitting Smoking | CDC](#)

Solid organ or blood stem cell transplant

Having had a solid organ or blood stem cell transplant, which includes bone marrow transplants, can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.

Get more information:

- [Transplant Safety | CDC](#)
- [COVID-19 Resources for Transplant Community](#) 

Stroke or cerebrovascular disease, which affects blood flow to the brain

Having cerebrovascular disease, such as having a stroke, can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.

Get more information:


- [Stroke | CDC](#)

- [COVID19 Stroke Podcast Series for Patients and Caregivers](#) 

Substance use disorders

Having a substance use disorder (such as alcohol, opioid, or cocaine use disorder) can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.

Get more information:

- [How to Recognize a Substance Use Disorder](#) 
- [Drug Overdose | Injury Center | CDC](#)

Tuberculosis

Having tuberculosis can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.

Get more information:

- [Basic TB Facts | TB | CDC](#)
- [Public Health Emergencies | TB | CDC](#)

Additional Information on Children and Teens

While children have been less affected by COVID-19 compared with adults, children can be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, and some children develop severe illness. Children with underlying medical conditions are at increased risk for severe illness compared to children without underlying medical conditions.

Current evidence suggests that children with medical complexity, with genetic, neurologic, or metabolic conditions, or with congenital heart disease can be at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Similar to adults, children with obesity, diabetes, asthma or chronic lung disease, sickle cell disease, or immunosuppression can also be at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19. One way to protect the health of children not currently eligible for vaccination is to ensure that everyone who is eligible in a household is [fully vaccinated against COVID-19](#).

- [Children, Teens, and Young Adults | CDC](#)
- [COVID-19 Parental Resources Kit | CDC](#)

Actions You Can Take

In general, the older you are, the more health conditions you have, and the more severe the conditions, the more important it is to take [preventive measures against COVID-19](#) such as vaccination, wearing a mask, social distancing, and practicing hand hygiene. Please [contact your state, tribal, local, or territorial health department](#) for more information on [COVID-19 vaccination in your area](#).

It is important for people with medical conditions and their providers to work together and manage those conditions carefully and safely. **Get [vaccinated for COVID-19 as soon as you can](#), including taking boosters if and when they are recommended for you.** If you have a medical condition, the following are actions you can take based on your medical conditions and other risk factors:

Seek care when needed

- Call your healthcare provider if you have any concerns about your medical conditions or if you get sick and think that you may have COVID-19. Discuss steps you can take to manage your health and risks. **If you need emergency help, call 911 right away.**

- Do not delay getting care for your medical condition because of COVID-19. Emergency departments, urgent care, clinics, and your health provider or doctor have infection prevention plans to protect you from getting COVID-19 if you need care.

Continue medications and preventive care

- Continue your medicines and do not change your treatment plan without talking to your healthcare provider.
- Have at least a 30-day supply of prescription and non-prescription medicines. [Talk to a healthcare provider](#), insurer, or pharmacist about getting an extra supply (i.e., more than 30 days) of prescription medicines, if possible, to reduce your trips to the pharmacy.
- Follow your current treatment plan (e.g., [Asthma Action Plan](#), dialysis schedule, blood sugar testing, nutrition, and exercise recommendations) to keep your medical condition under control.
- When possible, keep preventive care and other routine healthcare appointments (e.g., vaccinations and blood pressure checks) with your provider. Check with your provider about safety precautions for office visits and ask about telemedicine or remote healthcare visit options.
- Learn about [stress and coping](#). You may feel increased stress during this pandemic. Fear and anxiety can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions.

Accommodate dietary needs and avoid triggers

- Have shelf-stable food choices available to accommodate dietary needs based on your medical condition (e.g., kidney diet and [KCER 3-Day Emergency Diet Plan](#) [↗](#), diabetic diet).
- Know the triggers for your condition and avoid when possible (e.g., avoid [asthma triggers](#) by having another member of your household clean and disinfect your house for you or [avoid possible sickle cell disease triggers](#) to prevent vaso-occlusive episodes or pain crises).

Last Updated Oct. 14, 2021