



COVID-19

People with Certain Medical Conditions

Updated Apr. 29, 2022

If you or your family member are at high risk for severe illness, wear a mask or respirator with greater protection in public indoor spaces if you are in an area with a high COVID-19 Community Level. Talk with your healthcare provider about wearing a mask in a medium [COVID-19 Community Level](#).

If you test positive and are an older adult or someone who is at [high risk](#) of getting very sick from COVID-19, [treatment may be available](#). Contact a healthcare provider right away after a positive test to determine if you are eligible, even if your symptoms are mild right now. You can also visit a [Test to Treat location](#) and, if eligible, receive a prescription from a provider. Don't delay: Treatment must be started within the first few days to be effective.



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

What You Need To Know

- A person with any of the medical conditions listed below is more likely to get very sick with COVID-19. If you have one of these conditions, talk with your healthcare provider about how best to protect yourself from severe illness from COVID-19.
- The list below does not include all possible conditions that put you at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19. If you have questions about a condition not included on this list, talk to your healthcare provider about how best to manage your condition and protect yourself from COVID-19.
- [Staying up to date with COVID-19 vaccines](#) (getting primary series and booster) and following [preventive measures for COVID-19](#) are important. This is especially important if you are older or have severe health conditions or more than one health condition, including those on the list below.
- Approved and authorized COVID-19 vaccines (primary series and booster) are [safe and effective](#).
- [Some people who are immunocompromised](#), or people with weakened immune systems, may be eligible for an additional primary dose of COVID-19 vaccine.

Overview

Based on the current evidence, a person with any of the conditions listed below is more likely to get very sick from COVID-19. This means that a person with one or more of these conditions who gets very sick from COVID-19 (has severe illness from COVID-19) is more likely to:

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

In addition:

- [Older adults](#) are at highest risk of getting very sick 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 97 times higher than the number of deaths among people ages 18-29 years.](#)
- A person's risk of severe illness from COVID-19 increases as the number of underlying medical conditions they have increases.
- Some people are at increased risk of getting very sick or dying from COVID-19 because of where they live or work, or because they can't get health care. This includes many [people from 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 racial and ethnic minority groups are often younger when they develop chronic medical conditions and may be more likely to have more than one medical condition.
 - People with disabilities are more likely than those without disabilities to have [chronic health conditions, live in shared group \(also called "congregate"\) settings, and face more barriers in accessing health care](#). Studies have shown that some people with certain disabilities are more likely to get COVID-19 and have worse outcomes.

[Staying up to date with COVID-19 vaccines](#) (getting primary series and booster) and following [preventive measures for COVID-19](#) are important. This is especially important if you are older or have severe health conditions or more than one health condition, including those on this list. Learn more about how CDC develops [COVID-19 vaccination](#) recommendations. If you have a medical condition, learn more about [Actions You Can Take](#).

Medical Conditions

- The conditions on this list are in alphabetical order. They are **not in order of risk**.
- CDC [completed a review](#) for each medical condition on this list. This was done to ensure that these conditions met criteria for inclusion on this list. CDC conducts ongoing reviews of additional underlying conditions. If other medical conditions have enough evidence, they might be added to the list.
- Because 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 mostly affect children, may not be included on the list below. We will update the list as we learn more.
- A person with a condition that is not listed may still be at greater risk of getting very sick from COVID-19 than other people who do not have the condition. It is important that you **talk with your healthcare provider about your risk**.

Cancer

Having cancer can make you more likely to get very sick 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](#)

- [COVID-19: What People with Cancer Should Know – National Cancer Institute](#) 

Chronic kidney disease

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

Get more information:

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

Chronic liver disease

Having chronic liver disease can make you more likely to get very sick from COVID-19. Chronic liver disease can include alcohol-related liver disease, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, autoimmune hepatitis, and cirrhosis (or scarring of the liver).

Get more information:

- [Liver Disease](#) 
- [American Liver Foundation: Your Liver & COVID-19](#) 

Chronic lung diseases

Having a chronic lung disease can make you more likely to get very sick from COVID-19. Chronic lung diseases can 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 known as interstitial lung disease (including idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis)
- Pulmonary embolism (blood clot in the lungs)
- Pulmonary hypertension (high blood pressure in the lungs)

Get more information:

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

Cystic fibrosis

Having cystic fibrosis, with or without lung or other solid organ transplant (like kidney, liver, intestines, heart, and pancreas) can make you more likely to get very sick from COVID-19.

Get more information:

- [Cystic fibrosis](#)
- [CF and Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) | Cystic Fibrosis Foundation \(cff.org\)](#) 

Dementia or other neurological conditions

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

Get more information:

- [Dementia](#)
- [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 very sick from COVID-19.

Get more information:

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

Disabilities

People with some types of disabilities may be more likely to get very sick from COVID-19 because of underlying medical conditions, living in congregate settings, or systemic health and social inequities, including:

- [People with any type of disability that makes it more difficult to do certain activities or interact with the world around them, including people who need help with self-care or daily activities](#)
- [People with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder \(ADHD\)](#)
- [People with cerebral palsy](#)
- [People with birth defects](#)
- [People with intellectual and developmental disabilities](#)
- [People with learning disabilities](#)
- [People with spinal cord injuries](#) 
- [People with Down syndrome](#)

Get more information:

- [People with Disabilities | COVID-19](#)

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 very sick from COVID-19.

Get more information:

- [Heart Disease](#)
- [American Heart Association: COVID-19](#) 
- [NHLBI Information & Resources on COVID-19](#) 

HIV infection

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

Get more information:

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

Immunocompromised condition or weakened immune system

Some people are immunocompromised or have a weakened immune system, because of a medical condition and treatment for the condition. This includes people who have cancer and are on chemotherapy, or who have had a solid organ transplant, like a kidney transplant or heart transplant, and are taking medication to keep their transplant. Other people have to use certain types of medicines for a long time, like corticosteroids, that weaken their immune system. Such long-term uses can lead to [secondary or acquired immunodeficiency](#). Other people have a weakened immune system because of a life-long condition. For example, some people inherit problems with their immune system. One example is called [Primary immunodeficiency](#). Being immunocompromised can make you more likely to get very sick from COVID-19 or be sick for a longer period of time.

People who are immunocompromised or are taking medicines that weaken their immune system may not be protected even if they are [up to date on their vaccines](#). Talk with your healthcare provider about wearing a mask in a medium [COVID-19 Community Level](#) and what additional precautions may be necessary in medium or high COVID-19 Community Levels.

After completing the primary vaccination series, some people who are [moderately or severely immunocompromised](#) should get an additional primary dose and a booster. Because the immune response following COVID-19 vaccination may differ in people who are moderately or severely immunocompromised, [specific guidance](#) has been developed.

COVID-19 Preventive Medication

[Evusheld](#)  is an investigational medicine that can help protect you from getting COVID-19. You may be eligible for Evusheld if you:

- Are [moderately or severely immunocompromised](#) and may not mount an adequate immune response to COVID-19 vaccination OR have a history of severe allergic reactions to COVID-19 vaccines, and
- Do not currently have COVID-19 and have not recently had close contact with someone with COVID-19, and
- Are an adult or adolescent 12 years older weighing at least 88 pounds (40 kg)

Evusheld contains 2 different antibodies that can help prevent COVID-19. It must be given by your healthcare provider **before you get exposed to COVID-19**. Talk to your healthcare provider to find out if this option is right for you. Even if you receive Evusheld, taking multiple [prevention steps](#), such as wearing a [well-fitting mask or respirator](#) and avoiding crowded places, can provide additional layers of protection from COVID-19.

Get more information:

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

Mental health conditions

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

Get more information:

- [National Institute of Mental Health \(NIMH\) Shareable Resources on Coping with COVID-19](#) 
- [National Institute of Mental Health \(NIMH\) Depression](#) 
- [Mood Disorders](#) 

Overweight and obesity

Overweight (defined as a [body mass index](#) (BMI) is 25 kg/m² or higher, but under 30 kg/m²), obesity (BMI is 30 kg/m² or higher, but under 40 kg/m²), or severe obesity (BMI is 40 kg/m² or higher), can make you more likely to get very sick from COVID-19. The risk of severe illness from COVID-19 increases sharply with higher BMI.

Get more information:

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

Physical inactivity

People who do little or no physical activity are more likely to get very sick from COVID-19 than those who are physically active. Being physically active is important to being healthy. Get more information on physical activity and health, physical activity recommendations, how to become more active, and how to create activity-friendly communities:

- [Physical Activity](#)
- [Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd edition](#) 
- [Move Your Way®](#) 
- [Active People, Healthy Nation SM: Strategies to Increase Physical Activity](#)
- [National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability – Building Healthy Inclusive Communities](#) 

Pregnancy

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

Get more information:

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

Sickle cell disease or thalassemia

Having hemoglobin blood disorders like sickle cell disease or thalassemia (inherited red blood cell disorders) can make you more likely to get very sick from COVID-19.

Get more information:

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

Smoking, current or former

Being a current or former cigarette smoker can make you more likely to get very sick 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](#)
- [Tips From Former Smokers](#)
- [Health Benefits of Quitting Smoking](#)

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 very sick from COVID-19.

Get more information:

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

Stroke or cerebrovascular disease

Having cerebrovascular disease, such as having a stroke which affects blood flow to the brain, can make you more likely to get very sick from COVID-19.

Get more information:

- [Stroke](#)
- [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 very sick from COVID-19.

Get more information:

- [How to Recognize a Substance Use Disorder](#) 
- [Drug Overdose](#)

Tuberculosis

Having tuberculosis (TB) can make you more likely to get very sick from COVID-19.

Get more information:

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

Additional Information on Children and Teens

People of all ages, including children, can get very sick from COVID-19. Children with underlying medical conditions are at increased risk for getting very sick 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 getting very sick from COVID-19. Like adults, children with obesity, diabetes, asthma or chronic lung disease, sickle cell disease, or who are immunocompromised can also be at increased risk for getting very sick from COVID-19. Check out [COVID-19 Vaccines for Children and Teens](#) for more information on vaccination information for children.

- [Information for Parents and Families](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccines for Children and Teens](#)

Actions You Can Take

It is important to protect yourself and others by taking [preventive measures against COVID-19](#):

- [Stay up to date with your COVID-19 vaccines](#)
- Wear a well-fitting mask
- Avoid crowds and poorly ventilated spaces
- Test to prevent the spread to others
- Wash your hands often
- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Monitor your health daily

Please [contact your state, tribal, local, or territorial health department](#) for more information on [COVID-19 vaccination in your area](#). It is also important for people with medical conditions and their healthcare providers to work together and manage those conditions carefully and safely. [Stay up to date with your COVID-19 vaccines, including getting a booster when eligible](#). 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 healthcare provider have infection prevention plans to help 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(s) under control.
- When possible, keep your appointments (e.g., vaccinations and blood pressure checks) with your healthcare provider. Check with your healthcare provider about safety precautions for office visits and ask about telemedicine or virtual healthcare appointment options.
- Learn about [stress and coping](#). You may feel increased stress during this pandemic. Fear and anxiety can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions. It can be helpful to talk with a professional like a counselor, therapist, psychologist, or psychiatrist. Ask your primary care provider if you would like to speak with a professional. Getting regular exercise and being physically active is also a great way to reduce stress.

Accommodate dietary needs and avoid triggers

- Have non-perishable food choices such as canned goods available that meet your 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 pain crises).

Additional Resources

