

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Older Adults

Older adults and people who have severe underlying medical conditions like heart or lung disease or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing more serious complications from COVID-19 illness.



Reduce Your Risk of Getting Sick

There are things you can do to **reduce your risk of getting sick**.

- Stay home if possible.
- Wash your hands often.
- Take everyday precautions to keep space between yourself and others (stay 6 feet away, which is about two arm lengths).
- See also: [What You Can Do](#)

See also: [How to Protect Yourself](#)



Coping and Stress

You may feel **increased stress** during this pandemic. Fear and anxiety can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions.

See also: [Stress & Coping](#)



Symptoms

Symptoms of COVID-19 can range from mild symptoms to severe illness and death. Symptoms may **appear 2-14 days after exposure**.

Watch for **fever, cough, and shortness of breath**.

See also: [Symptoms and Testing](#)



Develop a Care Plan

A care plan summarizes your health conditions, medications, healthcare providers, emergency contacts, and end-of-life care options (for example, advance directives). Complete your care plan in consultation with your doctor, and if needed, with help from a family member or home nurse aide.

A care plan can have benefits beyond the current pandemic. You can update your care plan every year, or any time you have a change in your health or medications. Care plans can help reduce emergency room visits and hospitalizations, and improve overall medical management for people with a chronic health condition, resulting in better quality of life.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, having a care plan is an important part of emergency preparedness.

- [Guidance on how to develop your emergency preparedness care plan.](#)

- [Download a fillable care plan form](#)  [5 pages]



Senior Living Facilities

People with loved ones in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and other types of senior living facilities may be understandably concerned about their loved one’s risk of illness from COVID-19.

To protect these vulnerable friends and family members, CDC has advised that long-term care facilities

- restrict visitors,
- regularly check healthcare workers and residents for fevers and symptoms, and
- limit activities within the facility to keep residents safe.

8 out of 10 deaths reported in the U.S. have been in adults 65 years old and older

Among adults with confirmed COVID-19 reported in the U.S.:

- Estimated percent **requiring hospitalization**
 - 31-70% of adults 85 years old and older
 - 31-59% of adults 65-84 years old
- Estimated percent requiring **admission to intensive care unit**
 - 6-29% of adults 85 years old and older
 - 11-31% of adults 65-84 years old
- Estimated percent **who died**
 - 10-27% of adults 85 years old and older
 - 4-11% of adults 65-84 years old

COVID-19: What older adults need to know

Jay Butler, Deputy Director for Infectious Diseases at CDC, describes preventative measures to help protect older adults from COVID-19.

AARP's coronavirus information tele-town hall



CDC and other federal experts presented at an AARP tele-town hall event held on March 10, 2020 discussing prevention and care for older adults.

Other resources

[People at Higher Risk](#)

[Prevent Getting Sick](#)

[If You Are Sick](#)

[Symptoms & Testing](#)

Cases & Latest Updates

Page last reviewed: April 7, 2020