

BACKGROUND

Older adults and people who have severe chronic medical conditions like heart, lung or kidney disease are at higher risk for more serious COVID-19 illness. As people age, their immune systems change, making it harder for their bodies to fight off disease and infection. Many older adults are also more likely to have underlying health conditions that make it harder to cope with and recover from illness.

If you are at increased risk for COVID-19 complications due to age or because you have a severe underlying medical condition, it is important for you to take action to reduce your risk of exposure.

WHAT CAN I DO IF I AM AN AT RISK INDIVIDUAL?

If you are at higher risk for COVID-19 complications due to age or because you have a severe underlying medical condition, it is especially important for you to take actions to reduce your risk of exposure:

- Stay at home as much as possible;
- Make sure you have access to several weeks of medications and supplies in case you need to stay home for prolonged periods of time;
- When you do go out in public, keep away from others who are sick, limit close contact and wash your hands often;
- Avoid crowds; and
- Stay up to date on [CDC Travel Health Notices](#).

WHAT IF I GET SICK OR SHOWING SYMPTOMS?

- If you are sick with COVID-19 or suspect you are infected with the virus, you should take steps to help prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home and community.
- If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms, such as cough or difficulty breathing, call your healthcare provider for medical advice.
- If you develop any of the emergency warning signs for COVID-19, such as trouble breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, or bluish lips or face

SUPPORTING AT-RISK INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE SICK

It is essential to know what medications your loved one is taking and see if you can help them have extra on hand. You can also monitor food and other medical supplies (oxygen, dialysis, wound care) they would need and create a back-up plan. Stock up on non-perishable food items to keep in your home to minimize trips to stores. If you care for a loved one living in a care facility, monitor the situation, ask about the health of other residents frequently and know the protocol if there is an outbreak.

RESOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information, visit <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>

The latest information on the coronavirus in the U.S. and worldwide can be found on the CDC website

Help is available, contact the Crisis Text Line by texting **PA to 741-741**.

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