

Be Red Cross Ready

Prepare so you can protect.



What You Can do if You are at Higher Risk of Severe Illness from COVID-19

People at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are:

- Older adults

And, [people of any age with certain health conditions](#), including:

- Cancer
- Chronic kidney disease
- Chronic lung disease
- Dementia or other neurological conditions
- Diabetes (type 1 or type 2)
- Down syndrome
- Heart conditions
- HIV infection
- Having a weakened immune system
- Liver disease
- Overweight and obesity
- Pregnancy
- Sickle cell disease
- Smoking, current or former
- Having had a solid organ or blood stem cell transplant
- Stroke or cerebrovascular disease
- Substance use disorders

People at increased risk, and those who live or visit with them, need to take additional precautions to protect against COVID-19. For more information, see [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus). Use this tip sheet to help protect yourself, your loved ones, and your neighbors.

Get a COVID-19 vaccine as soon as you can

- Get a [COVID-19 vaccine](#) when it is available to you. COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective. To find out how you can get a vaccine, visit [cdc.gov/coronavirus/vaccines](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/vaccines).
- People are fully vaccinated:
 - 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, like the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or
 - 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, like Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine
 - If it has been less than 2 weeks since your shot, or if you still need to get your second dose, you are NOT fully protected. Keep taking all prevention steps until you are fully vaccinated.

If you are fully vaccinated, what has changed	If you are fully vaccinated, what has not changed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can gather indoors with fully vaccinated people without wearing a mask. • You can gather indoors with unvaccinated people from one other household (for example, visiting with relatives who all live together) without masks unless any of those people or anyone they live with has an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19. • If you have been around someone who has COVID-19, you do not need to stay away from others or get tested unless you have symptoms. 	<p>You should still take steps to protect yourself and others in many situations, like wearing a mask, staying at least 6 feet apart from others, avoiding crowds, and poorly ventilated spaces. Take these precautions whenever you are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In public • Gathering with unvaccinated people from more than one other household • Visiting with an unvaccinated person at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19 or who lives with a person at increased risk.

Wear a mask that covers your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin

Wear a mask when around others, and choose one that:

- Has 2 or more layers of washable fabric
- Completely covers your mouth and nose and secures under your chin
- Fits snugly against the sides of your face and does not have gaps
- Has a nose wire to prevent air from leaking out of the top of the mask

- Does not have an exhaust valve or vent which allows particles to escape
- If using a gaiter, ensure it has at least 2 layers or can be folded to make 2 layers and that it covers the entire mouth and nose
- A face shield cannot replace the use of a face mask

Stay 6 feet apart from others who do not live with you

- When going out in public, stay at least 6 feet away from other people and wear a mask.

Avoid crowds and poorly ventilated indoor spaces

- Avoid crowded indoor spaces.
- Ensure that indoor spaces are properly ventilated by bringing in outdoor air as much as possible.
- In general, being outdoors and in spaces with good ventilation reduces the risk of exposure.

Clean your hands often

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after being in a public place or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- Soap and water are always preferable, but if soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Create a personal support network made up of several trusted individuals that can help you

Assign them practical things that they can do to help. They may be able to help you with errands, getting groceries, and doing online shopping. They should check in with you regularly by phone or video calls to ensure your wellness. Share your health and medical information with them and be sure they know how to help you.

Develop a care plan

A care plan summarizes your medical conditions, medicines, healthcare providers, emergency contacts, and end-of-life care options. Complete your care plan in consultation with your doctor, and if needed, with help from a family member. Decide who will care for you should you become ill. Ensure that they understand your medical needs and have a copy of your care plan. The CDC has guidance on developing a [care plan](#) and a [fillable care plan form](#) to help you.

Have a 1-month supply of medications and a 2-week supply of food and supplies

To avoid unnecessary trips, have a **1-month supply of medications and a 2-week supply of food and supplies.**

- A 1-month supply of prescription medication includes over-the-counter medications like cough suppressants, fever-reducing drugs, a thermometer, and other medical supplies or equipment.
- A 2-week supply of food also includes water, household cleaning and disinfection supplies, soap, paper products, and personal hygiene items.

Additional Resources

- Center for Disease Control: [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)
- American Red Cross: [redcross.org/coronavirus](https://www.redcross.org/coronavirus)
- National Institute on Aging at [nia.nih.gov](https://www.nia.nih.gov)
- Call 211 for local resources. Or visit [211search.org](https://www.211search.org). See [auntbertha.com](https://www.auntbertha.com) for local resources
- AARP at [aarp.org/coronavirus](https://www.aarp.org/coronavirus) and [aarp.org/crf](https://www.aarp.org/crf)
- Find your local food bank at [feedingamerica.org/find-your-local-foodbank](https://www.feedingamerica.org/find-your-local-foodbank). Call first to check requirements
- To reach out for free 24/7 counseling or support, call or text the [Disaster Distress Helpline](https://www.disasterdistresshelpline.org) at 1-800-985-5990
- If you are feeling overwhelmed with emotions such as sadness, depression, anxiety, or feel like you want to harm yourself or someone else, call 911 or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255)