



CANADIAN GERIATRICS SOCIETY
LA SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE DE GÉRIATRIE

COVID-19 Recommendations for Older Adults

What do older adults need to know?

The best way to prevent illness from Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is to avoid virus exposure.

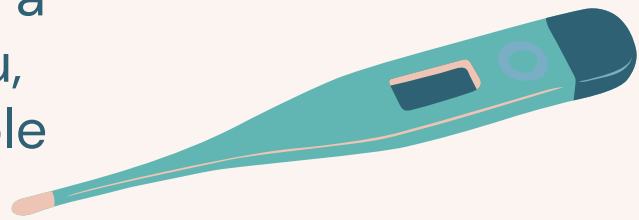
Who is high risk for severe illness from COVID-19?

1. Adults aged 60 and higher and/or
2. People with heart disease, respiratory disease, and diabetes are at increased risk of severe COVID-19 illness.

What should seniors do?

Take any illness seriously

COVID-19 may start like a common cold or mild flu, however in elderly people it may worsen quickly.



Watch for symptoms

Pay attention for potential COVID-19 symptoms including, fever, cough, and shortness of breath.



Stay informed

Go to the hospital immediately if you develop any of the symptoms below:

- Difficulty breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to wake from sleep
- Blue lips or face

If you have mild symptoms or have had contact with someone who has tested positive for the virus, call your doctor, [health unit](#) or pharmacist. They will tell you if you need to be tested and where to go.

Your local health unit has the most up-to-date and accurate information.

Many health units have social media accounts, which will be the fastest and most reliable information for your specific area, including how to stay safe and what to do if you think you may be infected.

[Click here for links to health units by province](#)
Check [CBC](#) and local news



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What should seniors do?

Wash your hands with soap and water often & thoroughly

[Click here](#) for the recommended method for hand washing



Avoid touching your face especially your mouth, eyes and nose. Avoid touching high-touch surfaces in public places – these include elevator buttons, door handles, handrails, grocery cart handles, etc.

If you cough or sneeze use a **tissue** or your **sleeve** to cover your hand or fingers or use your **elbow** instead. Use hand sanitizer when you can't wash your hands.



You can help by cleaning frequently touched surfaces (for example, tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks and cell phones).

Physical Distancing



Avoid people who have recently travelled.

Limit your in-person interactions and keep person-to-person distance to two metres (six feet) away whenever possible.



Only travel when necessary. Avoid public transportation as much as possible. If you have appointments, call ahead to check for the latest closures. Look for delivery services or help from others.

Groceries/Household Items



- Ensure you have phone numbers of people who could do errands for you, including backup if your caregiver gets sick.
- Have enough household items and groceries on hand so that you will be prepared to stay at home for at least one week and a plan for if you cannot go out of the house for two weeks
- Stock up on nutrient-dense and non-perishable foods to have on hand in your home in order to minimize trips to stores

Have a plan



Canadians can call 211 on a telephone or visit 211.ca to get information about local supports. Visit [here](#).

Medical Supplies

- Have a regular supply of medications (over-the-counter as well as prescription) in your home. Call your pharmacist a few days **BEFORE** you need more of any medication. If you have COVID-19 symptoms, call first before going to the pharmacy. Ask if they deliver or you can arrange curbside pickup.
- Pharmacies are providing only 30 day supplies on a temporary basis to ensure all Canadians continue to have access to the medications they need. If this is challenging for you, talk to your pharmacist about options. [Click here](#) for information and resources.
- Have a written list of **ALL** medications.
- Monitor medical supplies (oxygen, incontinence, dialysis and wound care) needed and create a back-up plan.

Caregiver Supports



What others can do to support older adults: These recommendations are intended for family and caregivers supporting older adults.

- Know what medications your loved one is taking and help them ensure they have a supply from their pharmacy.
- Monitor food and other medical supplies (oxygen, incontinence, dialysis and wound care) needed and create a back-up plan.
- Stock up on non-perishable food to have on hand in your home in order 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 the other residents frequently, and know the outbreak protocol of that facility.

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