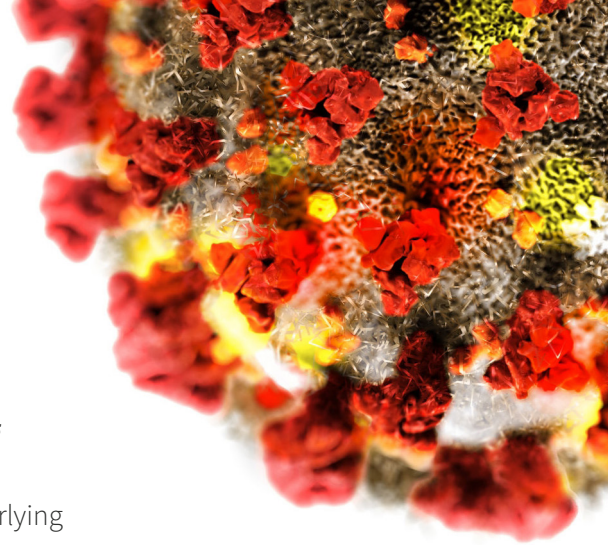




CHRONIC DISEASE AND COVID-19: Who's at Risk and How to Prepare

Older adults and people living with chronic conditions are at higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19. In addition to following all the CDC and WHO recommended precautions, it is important that people with the following underlying health conditions and their loved ones understand how to help minimize risks.



HEART DISEASE

(congenital heart disease, congestive heart failure and coronary artery disease)



CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE

(including receiving dialysis)



LUNG DISEASES

(asthma, COPD, cystic fibrosis, emphysema or other conditions associated with impaired lung function or requiring home oxygen)



HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE



CHRONIC LIVER DISEASE



DIABETES OR OTHER ENDOCRINE DISORDERS



BLOOD DISORDERS

(sickle cell disease)



COMPROMISED IMMUNE SYSTEM

(cancer treatment involving chemotherapy or radiation, taking high doses of corticosteroids or other immunosuppressant medications, HIV or AIDS, organ or bone marrow transplant recipient)



DISORDERS OF THE BRAIN, SPINAL CORD, PERIPHERAL NERVE, AND MUSCLE

(cerebral palsy, epilepsy, stroke, intellectual disability, muscular dystrophy, or spinal cord injury)²

SIX STEPS YOU CAN TAKE:

PREPARE

- 1 Contact your healthcare provider and ask about getting extra supply of necessary medications, testing supplies, oxygen, and disposable medical equipment you use.** Many insurers are providing longer coverage for medicines and testing supplies to allow people to stay at home.
- 2 Check with your healthcare provider's office in advance of any scheduled appointments.** Check-in procedures may have changed, and telehealth may now be an option.
- 3 Be sure to have over-the-counter medicines and medical supplies to treat fever and other symptoms.** It is important to remember that 80% of those who contract the virus experience only mild symptoms. Most people will be able to recover from COVID-19 at home.

PREVENT

- 4 Take your medicines as prescribed.** Do not stop taking medicines without being advised by your doctor to stop. Managing chronic conditions is important prevention.

REACT

- 5** If you or a loved one experience COVID-19 symptoms – fever, cough, and shortness of breath – **seek medical advice.**
- 6 CALL BEFORE YOU GO.** Hospitals and doctors' offices often will have specific procedures for seeing potential COVID-19 patients.

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

<https://www.fightchronicdisease.org/resources/covid-19-informational-resources-high-risk-groups>

¹ <https://ourworldindata.org/coronavirus>

² <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/action.html>;

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/high-risk-complications.html>