

# Who is at risk for COVID-19?

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While anyone can catch SARS-CoV-2, certain groups are at greater risk of developing more severe illness:

- People ages 60 or older
- People with compromised immune systems
- People with preexisting health conditions, including cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure (hypertension), diabetes or obesity.

While older people and those with other health conditions are more likely to develop severe disease, healthy young people—including children—can also become seriously ill. A small proportion of children develop a condition known as severe multisystem inflammatory syndrome.

People with cancer who are being treated with certain types of medication and those who have undergone stem cell transplants or CAR-T therapy may have weakened immune systems and are prone to infections. People with lung cancer and blood cancers such as leukemia or lymphoma are more likely to develop severe disease.

Most people with HIV who are on effective antiretroviral treatment and have a high CD4 cell count do not appear to be more likely to contract SARS-CoV-2 or to develop severe COVID-19. However, those who are not on treatment, those with a detectable HIV viral load, those who have a low current CD4 count or had a very low count in the past, and people with comorbidities are at greater risk.

People with advanced liver disease, including cirrhosis or fatty liver disease, are at risk for more severe COVID-19. People who have received a liver transplant and are taking immune-suppressing drugs should take extra precautions to prevent infection.

COVID-19 vaccines are safe and recommended for all these groups. Those with moderate to severe immune suppression may not respond as well, but the vaccines still offer some protection.

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