

COVID-19 FAQs

High-Risk Populations

Q: What does it mean to be high-risk?

A: High-risk populations are more susceptible to severe outcomes if they have COVID-19. They are not necessarily more susceptible to catching the virus that causes the disease.

Q: Who is high-risk?

A: People who are older than 65 or have severe obesity, chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma, a serious heart condition, a compromised/weakened immune system, diabetes, chronic kidney disease (and receiving dialysis) or liver disease.

Q: What are severe outcomes?

A: Severity typically means how much impact the illness or condition has on your body's function. People with COVID-19 have experienced a range of reactions, from little to no symptoms/illness to critical, life-threatening illness, usually involving the lungs. High-risk people are more likely to experience these critical outcomes.

Q: If I am high risk what should I do or not do to prevent COVID-19?

A: You should be extra vigilant about taking the recommended precautions, such as washing your hands frequently, disinfecting high-touch areas in your home often, and staying 6 feet from others. Stay home, including working from home, except for medical appointments. Use online shipping/delivery services for necessities such as food, prescriptions, and hygiene and sanitation supplies, or ask someone else to do your grocery shopping, pick up your prescriptions, and perform other errands. If you must go out, use drive-thru services and curbside pickup whenever possible or go at non-peak times or during specified hours for high-risk groups. Stay 6 feet from all others whenever possible. Wear a cloth face covering/mask and immediately sanitize hands after handling items. Wash hands as soon as you arrive home.

Q: Will the cloth face covering protect me?

A: Face coverings are strongly recommended because they can potentially prevent transmission from people with COVID-19 to others. The disease can be transmitted even if carriers have no symptoms and are unaware they have the disease. Do not wear a cloth face covering if it is unadvised for health reasons, such as breathing difficulties. Find additional information on coverings [here](#) and [here](#).

Q: Can I go to regular doctor appointments?

A: If you have a medical appointment, or dentist or eyecare appointment, call your healthcare provider before going. Your provider will offer guidance to help you determine risk and decide whether you need to make a visit. When possible, use video or telephone medical services.

Q: Should I avoid the hospital? What if I have an emergency not related to COVID-19?

A: Do not avoid necessary care. If you have an emergency, call 911 and tell the dispatcher about your high-risk or underlying condition. At a hospital or other healthcare facility, inform staff right away of your high-risk or underlying condition. Emergency departments and other facilities have contingency infection prevention plans to protect you from getting COVID-19 if you need care for your underlying condition.

Q: What if I get sick?

A: If you have [symptoms of COVID-19](#) or other concerning symptoms, contact a healthcare provider right away and provide details. It is important that you are under care as soon as possible.

Q: When can I visit family members, friends, or neighbors again?

A: That is unclear. Currently, public health orders prohibit public and private gatherings outside a single household or family. A vaccine could help protect you, but could take months or years to develop. If and when prohibitions are lifted, contact your healthcare provider before making any in-person visits. Try to increase phone calls, video calls, letters, and other communication methods.

Q: What if I am overwhelmed being isolated, anxious or depressed?

A: If you are struggling emotionally or mentally, help is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call the COVID-19 CareLine at 1-800-720-9616.

Q: What if I have to go to work?

A: Notify your employer of your high-risk status and ask for accommodations or a change in position to keep you away from others as much as possible. Wear a face covering. Whenever possible stay at least 6 feet from other people. Wash your hands often, try not to touch your face, and frequently disinfect work areas and high-touch items in your workplace with disinfecting cleanser. Don't share work materials or equipment, especially equipment used near the face. Don't congregate with others in breakrooms or other areas. Avoid public or shared transportation if possible. Monitor yourself for [COVID-19 symptoms](#) and stay home and call your healthcare provider if you experience any or otherwise feel sick.

Q: What about the people I live with? What if they go out to work or for necessities?

A: Whenever possible, people who live with someone in a high-risk category should take precautions as though they are high-risk themselves.

Find additional information on living with high-risk conditions [here](#). Related information from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention can be found [here](#).

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For additional information, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov.

For answers to your COVID-19 questions, call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634).

Your mental health is just as important as your physical health. If you or a loved one are experiencing anxiety related to the coronavirus pandemic, help is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call the COVID-19 CareLine at 1-800-720-9616.

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 Ohio

Department
of Health

Protect yourself and others from
COVID-19 by taking these precautions.

PREVENTION

For additional information call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH or visit coronavirus.ohio.gov.



STAY HOME



PRACTICE
SOCIAL
DISTANCING



GET ADEQUATE SLEEP
AND EAT WELL-
BALANCED
MEALS



WASH HANDS OFTEN
WITH WATER AND SOAP
(20 SECONDS
OR LONGER)



DRY HANDS WITH
A CLEAN TOWEL
OR AIR DRY
YOUR HANDS



COVER YOUR MOUTH
WITH A TISSUE OR
SLEEVE WHEN
COUGHING OR SNEEZING



AVOID TOUCHING
YOUR EYES, NOSE,
OR MOUTH WITH
UNWASHED HANDS
OR AFTER
TOUCHING SURFACES



CLEAN AND DISINFECT
"HIGH-TOUCH"
SURFACES OFTEN



CALL BEFORE VISITING
YOUR DOCTOR



PRACTICE GOOD
HYGIENE HABITS

For more information, visit: coronavirus.ohio.gov