

Are You at High Risk for Serious Disease from Covid-19?

Many people don't realize they're at high risk for developing serious illness from Covid-19. Are you one of them?

Who is at high risk for getting serious illness from Covid-19?

Risk of death increases as you age

Ages 50-64
25x higher

Ages 65-74
60x higher

than ages
18-29

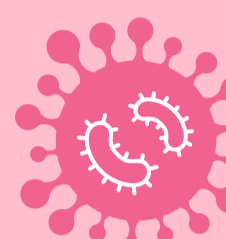
Serious illness from Covid-19 means you're more likely to be hospitalized, need intensive care or need a ventilator to breathe and are at increased risk of death.

Adults over age 50

Your risk increases with age, and those over 65 are most likely to get very sick from Covid-19. There are several reasons for this:



Older people tend to have more underlying conditions that are risk factors for serious Covid-19 illness.



The immune system gets weaker as we get older, which can make it harder to fight infection.



Our lungs don't function as well as they do when we're younger, which can make a respiratory illness like Covid-19 more serious.



Covid-19 is an inflammatory disease, and inflammation in older people can be intense and can damage internal organs.

8 out of 10 Covid-19 deaths occur in people over 65

People with underlying health conditions

The more medical conditions one has, the greater their risk for serious illness. Some of the medical conditions that increase your risk are:

- Cancer
- Chronic kidney disease
- Chronic liver disease
- Chronic lung diseases, including asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Cystic fibrosis
- Dementia or other neurological conditions
- Diabetes (type 1 or type 2)
- Heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease and possibly high blood pressure
- HIV infection
- Immunocompromised or weakened immune system
- Mental health conditions, including depression
- Overweight and obesity
- Limited physical activity
- Pregnancy and people within 6 weeks of giving birth

- Sickle cell disease or thalassemia
- Smoking (either currently or formerly)
- Solid organ or blood stem cell transplant
- Cerebrovascular disease, such as stroke
- Substance abuse disorders
- Tuberculosis

People with disabilities

Disabilities, such as attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, cerebral palsy, birth defects, Down syndrome, intellectual and developmental disabilities, and spinal cord injuries, put people at higher risk of serious illness because they are more likely to:



Have chronic health conditions



Live in group settings



Face barriers in accessing healthcare

People in certain racial or ethnic groups

Health and social inequities contribute to an increased risk of severe Covid-19 illness in marginalized racial and ethnic groups. These factors include:



Lower socioeconomic status and poorer living conditions



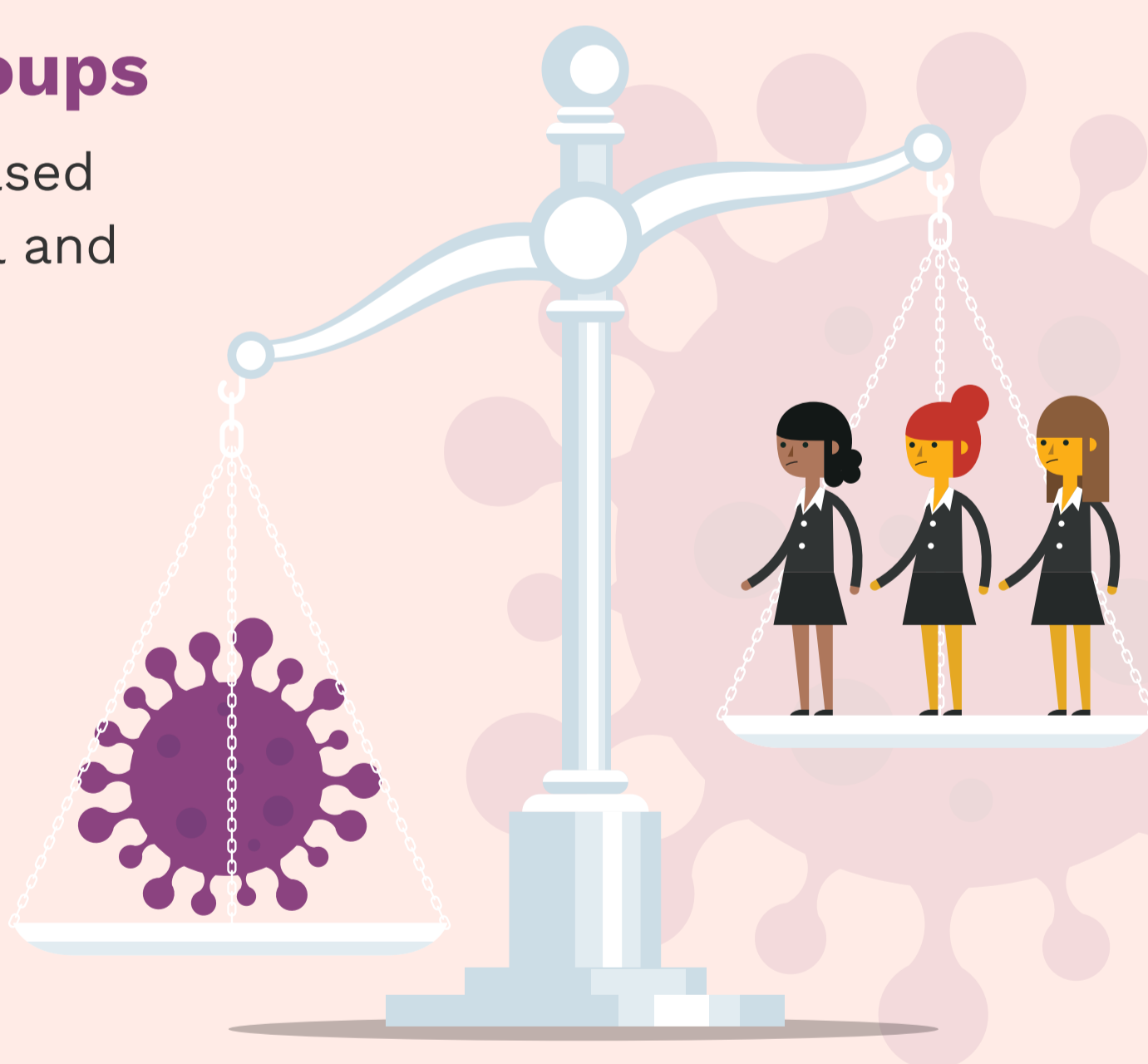
Limited access to vaccines and treatment



Increased exposure to Covid-19 among frontline and essential workers, who are often members of marginalized groups



Long-term effects of stress caused by discrimination



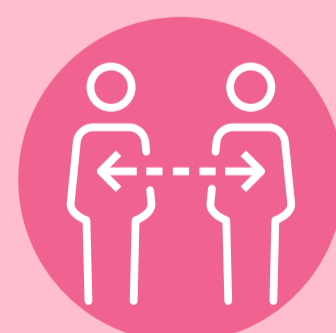
How can you reduce your risk of getting Covid-19?



Stay up to date on your Covid-19 vaccines



Mask while in public



Avoid contact with people who have Covid-19

Cases of Covid-19 and deaths remain high.

If you've been exposed to Covid-19:

- ✓ Wear a mask
- ✓ Watch for symptoms
- ✓ Isolate and test immediately if you have symptoms
- ✓ Test 5 days after exposure even if you don't have symptoms

Keep in touch with your healthcare practitioner

If you have symptoms and are 50 years or older or are at high risk of getting very sick, **get tested**. If you have Covid-19, you may be eligible for treatment.

If you have a health condition that puts you at high risk and you develop symptoms of Covid-19 — or if your symptoms worsen even if you are not at high risk — contact your healthcare practitioner so they can monitor you.