

## INTRODUCTORY

# COVID-19

## Information and Services

# Guide

for Older Adults and Family/Friend Caregivers

### What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a coronavirus. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. Some cause illness in people and others cause illness in animals.

COVID-19 is a new coronavirus that has never before been identified in humans.

COVID-19 is a respiratory virus that spreads very easily from an infected person through respiratory droplets (e.g. coughing or sneezing).

Symptoms of COVID-19 have included cough, fever, difficulty breathing, and pneumonia in both lungs.

Those who are infected may not realize they are sick because symptoms can take up to 14 days to appear after exposure.

For more facts about COVID-19 visit: [Canada.ca/coronavirus](https://Canada.ca/coronavirus) can be contacted by telephone or online.

### How do I keep safe?

1. Keep a distance of at least 2 metres between yourself and others if you must go out.
2. Physically distance yourself by staying at home as much as possible.
3. Wear a non-medical mask or face covering in public when it is not possible to maintain a 2 metre physical distance from other people.

For more facts about COVID-19 visit: [Canada.ca/coronavirus](https://Canada.ca/coronavirus).

Source: Public Health Agency of Canada, 2020

# Who is at High Risk?

- Older adults (usually 65 and older).
- People with underlying medical conditions (e.g. heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases, cancer).
- People with a compromised immune system from a medical condition or treatment (e.g. chemotherapy).

## Online:

For more details about who may be at high risk if exposed to COVID-19, visit:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/vulnerable-populations-covid-19.html>

## Are you or the person you care for experiencing symptoms of COVID-19?

If you have questions about the symptoms of COVID-19, or you start to feel ill, you can get trusted information and support by telephone or online.

### Telephone:

Your personal health care provider Telehealth:

**1-866-797-0000**, or

Your District Health Unit:

Peterborough Public Health:

**705-743-1000**

Haliburton Kawartha Pine

Ridge District Health Unit:

**1-866-888-4577 x5020**

Toronto Public Health:

**416-338-7600**

Durham Region Health

Department:

**905-668-7711**

### Online:

Take the [online COVID-19 self-assessment](#). Use this self-assessment to help you understand your next steps and how to seek further care.

## How do I protect my health and the health of the person I am caring for?

- Wash your hands often for 20 seconds with soap and water, or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Sneeze and cough into your sleeve.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Keep things simple and try to stick to a comfortable daily routine.
- Listen to reliable sources of information.
- Reach out to friends, neighbours and family, and tell them how you would like to stay connected.
- Listen to the news only once or twice a day if it is causing you anxiety.

### For family/friend caregivers

[Self-isolation: Guide for caregivers, household members and close contacts](#) has been created by Public Health Ontario. It has simple strategies that you can use during self-isolation while caring for an older adult.



*“I just want one number to call and someone to help me figure out what is available in my area.”*

## Government and community-based services

211 Community Support  
[211ontario.ca](https://211ontario.ca)

Easily find/search government and community-based services during COVID-19.

[211 Live Chat](#) is also available Monday to Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Call or text  
**2-1-1**  
day or night.

## Up-to-date information

[The Ontario Government Website](#): provides COVID-19 updates every day, seven days a week, at 10:30 a.m. and 5.30 p.m. EDT.

[Public Health Ontario](#): provides evidence-based information on COVID-19.

*“What are the trusted websites to get up-to-date information related to COVID-19?”*

*“I am caring for a person living with dementia. How can I support them during a pandemic?”*

## Alzheimer Societies

Alzheimer Societies are continuing to support people during the pandemic with telephone and web-based support. Contact your local Alzheimer Society to find out what local services are available to you.

For trusted resources related to dementia and behavioural supports, visit:

<https://elizz.com/caregiver-resources/caring-for-someone-with-dementia-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>

<https://www.dementiability.com/COVID-19-Resources>

<https://brainxchange.ca/COVID-19.aspx>

[Alzheimer Society of Peterborough, Kawartha Lakes, Northumberland and Haliburton:](#)

**705-748-5131**

[Alzheimer Society of Durham Region:](#)

**1-888-301-1106**

[Alzheimer Society of Toronto:](#)

**416-322-6560**

## Support and Information

The [Ontario Caregiver Organization](#) website provides a long list of tips and resources for caregivers (e.g. mental health, support groups, and other helpful resources).

Ontario Caregiver Organization also has a 24/7 hotline that you can call for support: **1-833-416-2273**

On how to cope with stress and anxiety, visit: <https://www.camh.ca/en/health-info/mental-health-and-covid-19#coping>

For family/friend caregivers the [Caregiving Strategies](#) website provides information and strategies for caregivers who are caring for an older adult living with frailty.

If you, or someone you are caring for are looking to find health care services that can be done in your own home, or in the community, or if you are interested in learning more about supported living programs or long-term care options, [Home and Community Care at the Central East Local Health Integration Network](#) can help: 1-800-263-3877

You can also find many other health services by visiting the [Central East Healthline](#) website.

*“I am a family/friend caregiver looking for additional support and information”*