

COVID-19

What we know

The virus that causes COVID-19 has continued to evolve and change, so COVID-19 vaccines have been changed too.



COVID-19 is still out there¹⁻³

COVID-19 is a disease caused by SARS-CoV-2 virus, which may lead to severe outcomes.^{2,3*}

COVID-19 vaccines are designed to help protect against more currently circulating strains.⁴

Staying up to date with COVID-19 vaccination is one of the best ways to help protect yourself, and for your loved ones to help protect themselves, against COVID-19.⁴

People report a wide range of COVID-19 symptoms, spanning from mild (or no symptoms at all) to severe. Symptoms of COVID-19 may appear 2 to 14 days after exposure to the virus, and possible symptoms can include⁵:

- Congestion or runny nose
- Cough
- Diarrhea
- Fatigue
- Fever or chills
- Headache
- Muscle or body aches
- Nausea and vomiting
- New loss of taste or smell
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Sore throat

These are not all the possible symptoms of COVID-19. Symptoms also may change with new COVID-19 variants and can vary by person depending on vaccination status.⁵



To learn more about possible COVID-19 symptoms, scan here to visit **CDC.gov***

**Severe outcomes of COVID-19 are defined as hospitalization, admission to the intensive care unit (ICU), intubation or mechanical ventilation, or death.³*

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COVID-19 and Health Risks in Older Adults⁶

According to the CDC, a person's risk of severe illness from COVID-19 increases as the number of risk factors they have increases. In addition to older age, risk factors can include⁶:



Being overweight or obese



Being a current or former smoker



Having diabetes



Having a heart condition



Having a chronic lung disease



Having a chronic kidney disease



Having a weakened immune system



Having a neurologic condition

This isn't a complete list of risk factors and is not in the order of severity.⁶



According to the CDC, this means that an older adult with 1 or more of these conditions who gets sick from COVID-19 is more likely to develop severe illness including⁶:

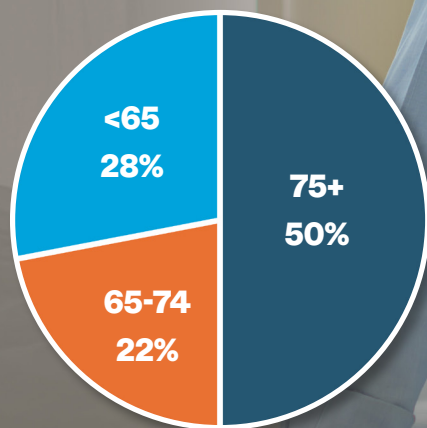
- Be hospitalized
- Need intensive care
- Require a ventilator to help them breathe
- Die

~75% of American adults have at least 1 risk factor for getting very sick from COVID-19.⁷

COVID-19 continues to cause severe illness and hospitalization⁸

According to data collected by the CDC* from March 2020 to April 2025, adults 65 years of age and older accounted for **72% of all COVID-19-associated hospitalizations** among adults.⁸

COVID-19-associated hospitalizations by age group (years of age)⁸



Did you know? You can get a COVID-19 vaccine when getting a flu vaccine if you're due for both, as recommended by the CDC.⁹ Ask your healthcare provider for more information.

71% of adults with COVID-19-associated hospitalizations did not receive a 2024-2025 COVID-19 vaccine.⁸

*Data from COVID-NET reported by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices for adults aged ≥18 years hospitalized with laboratory-confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection by age group from March 2020-May 2025.⁸

CDC=Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; COVID-NET=Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Hospitalization Surveillance Network.

The CDC recommends that all eligible people stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines¹

Getting vaccinated against COVID-19 is important because:

- It helps protect against COVID-19 and serious illness, including hospitalization³
- The virus that causes COVID-19 continues to change and circulate year-round¹⁰
- Protection from prior COVID-19 vaccination or infection decreases over time³
- Staying up to date on immunizations, including COVID-19, is recommended as part of a core prevention strategy even if you have previously had COVID-19^{1,11}

For adults 65 years of age and older and individuals who are moderately or severely immunocompromised, talk to your care team about staying up to date on COVID-19 vaccination.¹²

According to the CDC, getting a COVID-19 vaccine is especially important if you³:

- Are 65 years of age or older
- Have a medical condition that increases the risk for severe COVID-19
- Live in a long-term care facility
- Have never received a COVID-19 vaccine

Actor portrayal.

Possible serious side effects

There is a remote chance that a COVID-19 vaccine could cause a severe allergic reaction.¹³

Signs of a severe allergic reaction can include¹³:

- Difficulty breathing
- Swelling of your face and throat
- Fast heartbeat
- Rash all over the body
- Dizziness or weakness

If you get a COVID-19 vaccine and you think you might be having a severe allergic reaction after leaving the vaccination provider site, seek immediate medical care.¹³

Myocarditis and pericarditis after COVID-19 vaccination¹³

- According to the CDC, myocarditis (inflammation of the heart muscle) and pericarditis (inflammation of the outer lining of the heart) have been seen rarely after COVID-19 vaccination. The cases have been most frequently seen in adolescent and young adult males.¹³
- Seek medical attention right away if you experience chest pain, shortness of breath, or feelings of having a fast-beating, fluttering, or pounding heart after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine. These could be symptoms of myocarditis or pericarditis.¹³

Fainting can happen after getting injectable vaccines¹⁴

Possible side effects from COVID-19 vaccination

According to the CDC, side effects after getting a COVID-19 shot can vary from person to person and across different age groups.¹³

The most common reactions reported following COVID-19 vaccination include¹³:

- Pain, redness, and swelling where the shot is given
- Headache
- Fever
- Muscle aches
- Chills
- Fatigue

Talk to your care team for more information about the safety of COVID-19 vaccines.

Don't wait

**Ask your care team about
getting a COVID-19 vaccine
today.**

References: 1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). How to protect yourself and others. Updated March 10, 2025. Accessed July 14, 2025. <https://www.cdc.gov/covid/prevention/index.html> 2. CDC. About COVID-19. Updated June 13, 2024. Accessed July 14, 2025. <https://www.cdc.gov/covid/about/index.html> 3. CDC. Underlying conditions and the higher risk for severe COVID-19. February 6, 2025. Accessed August 6, 2025. <https://www.cdc.gov/covid/hcp/clinical-care/underlying-conditions.html> 4. CDC. Staying up to date with COVID-19 vaccines. Updated June 6, 2025. Accessed July 14, 2025. <https://www.cdc.gov/covid/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html> 5. CDC. Symptoms of COVID-19. Updated March 10, 2025. Accessed July 14, 2025. <https://www.cdc.gov/covid/signs-symptoms/> 6. CDC. People with certain medical conditions and COVID-19 risk factors. June 11, 2025. Accessed July 14, 2025. <https://www.cdc.gov/covid/risk-factors/index.html> 7. Ajufo E, Rao S, Navar AM, Pandey A, Ayers CR, Khera A. U.S. population at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19. *Am J Prev Cardiol.* 2021;6:100156. 8. CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). Current epidemiology of COVID-19. June 25, 2025. Accessed August 6, 2025. <https://www.cdc.gov/acip/downloads/slides-2025-06-25-26/02-MacNeil-COVID-508.pdf> 9. CDC. Immunizations for respiratory viruses prevention. Updated June 6, 2025. Accessed July 14, 2025. <https://www.cdc.gov/respiratory-viruses/prevention/immunizations.html> 10. CDC. COVID-19 can surge throughout the year. July 3, 2024. Accessed July 14, 2025. <https://www.cdc.gov/ncird/whats-new/covid-19-can-surge-throughout-the-year.html> 11. CDC. About reinfection. Updated June 14, 2024. Accessed July 14, 2025. <https://www.cdc.gov/covid/about/reinfection.html> 12. CDC. CDC recommends second dose of 2024-2025 COVID-19 vaccine for people 65 years and older and for people who are moderately or severely immunocompromised. October 23, 2024. Accessed July 14, 2025. <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2024/s1023-covid-19-vaccine.html> 13. CDC. Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) vaccine safety. Updated January 31, 2025. Accessed July 14, 2025. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccine-safety/vaccines/covid-19.html> 14. CDC. Interim clinical considerations for use of COVID-19 vaccines in the United States. Updated May 12, 2025. Accessed July 14, 2025. <https://www.cdc.gov/covid/media/pdfs/2025/04/Interim-Clinical-Consideration-for-Use-of-COVID-19-Vaccines.pdf>

