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# Questions to Ask Your Doctor About COVID-19 and Your Chronic Illness

## Know Your Risk

Older adults who get COVID-19 are at greater risk for severe illness, hospitalization, and death. But people of any age with these underlying medical conditions are also at increased risk:

- Cancer
- Chronic kidney disease
- Chronic lung diseases, including COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), asthma (moderate-to-severe), interstitial lung disease, cystic fibrosis, and pulmonary hypertension
- Down Syndrome
- Heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, cardiomyopathies or hypertension
- HIV infection
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant
- Liver disease
- Overweight and obesity
- Pregnancy
- Sickle cell disease or thalassemia
- Smoking, current or former
- Stroke or cerebrovascular disease
- Substance use disorders
- Diabetes (type 1 or type 2)

## General Questions to Ask Your Doctor

Take this list of questions with you on your next visit to your doctor's office to create an informed care plan for your specific health condition:

- Does my condition put me at higher risk of contracting COVID-19? Why or why not?
- Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe for people with my health condition?
- Should I stop taking any of my medications before getting a COVID-19 vaccine?

- Does your office offer COVID-19 vaccines? If not, do you have a suggestion about where I can get a COVID-19 vaccine?
- What symptoms of COVID-19 should I watch for?
- What should I do if I have symptoms of COVID-19?
- Does your office provide COVID-19 testing? If not, do you have a suggestion about where I can get a COVID-19 test?
- If I get sick from COVID-19, will it affect my underlying condition?
- Should I continue taking my medications if I get COVID-19?
- If I get tested and I'm negative for COVID-19, but I still don't feel well, what should I do?
- Is telehealth available so I can get care virtually or be seen by a doctor over the Internet?

## Questions to Ask Your Doctor if You Have Upcoming Medical Exams, Tests, or Surgeries

- Will having this procedure put me at a higher risk of getting COVID-19? Why or why not?
- Is it important for me to have this procedure now, or is it safe to wait?
- Do I need to get a COVID-19 test before I can get my procedure?
- Should I get a COVID-19 vaccine before or after my procedure is done?
- Do you allow family or caregivers to accompany me? Can people visit me?
- Is there a chance the hospital or facility will cancel my procedure or surgery? What are my options if it's canceled? Can I have the procedure or surgery somewhere else?

## Reduce Your Risk of Getting Sick

When visiting your doctor or when you're out in public:

- Wear your mask
- Wash your hands frequently
- Stay at least 6 feet apart from other people

## For More Information

If you have more questions about doctor's visits during the COVID-19 pandemic, visit the [CDC website](#).