

Risk Factors for Severe Illness from Respiratory Viruses

What to know

In addition to CDC's Respiratory Virus Guidance, there are several specific considerations for people who are at higher risk for severe illness.

Overview

Illnesses caused by respiratory viruses like COVID-19, flu, and RSV can make anyone sick. However, there are a range of risk factors that can increase a person's chances of getting very sick (severe illness). Generally, people at higher risk of severe illness from respiratory viruses are older adults, young children, people with compromised immune systems, people with disabilities, and pregnant people.

Making a plan

If you or someone around you has one or more risk factors for severe illness, using the prevention strategies described in CDC's [Respiratory Virus Guidance](#) is especially important. In addition, there are several specific considerations for people with certain risk factors for severe illness:

- [Older adults](#)
- [Young children](#)
- [People with weakened immune systems](#)
- [People with disabilities](#)
- [Pregnant people](#)