Coronavirus and older adults: What to know and how to prepare

People ages 60 and up are at higher risk of novel coronavirus infection. Symptoms include fever, dry cough and difficulty breathing, and it's primarily spread between people. Here's how older adults can prepare and protect themselves from the novel coronavirus. This guidance comes from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) and Drs. Carla Perissinotto and Samir Sinha, both geriatricians.

Note: Recommendations for Covid-19 may change as officials learn more, so monitor your local health department and the CDC for updates.

By Scottie Andrew, CNN

Take precautions

- Cancel non-essential doctor's appointments
- Schedule telehealth sessions for appointments you can't miss
- Designate an emergency contact
- [Wash your hands frequently](#) (scrub for 20 seconds with soap and water)
- Use hand sanitizer when soap isn't available

Stock up

- Make sure you have enough groceries and household products to last you a "prolonged period of time" at home

- Prescription medication may be difficult to get ahead of time, so consider mail ordering

Travel

- Avoid nonessential plane travel

- Don't go on a [cruise](#) —— cruise ship passengers are at a higher risk of infection

Life

- Stay at home as much as possible if you live in an area where there's an outbreak

- In public, avoid crowds and poorly ventilated buildings

- Keep several feet of distance from people

- Wash your hands with soap after going in public

- If you need to isolate, keep in touch with family and friends

Nursing homes

- Most long-term care facilities have [pandemic plans](#)

- Call facility staff for information on their plan

- If you're sick, do not visit a nursing home

- If you're visiting a nursing home in an outbreak area, get screened before entering

- Figure out an alternative mode of communication if a nursing home bans visitors

If you think you're sick

- [Call your doctor](#) before going in for a test

- Don't use public transportation and stay at home as much as possible

- Call a local coronavirus hotline for more information