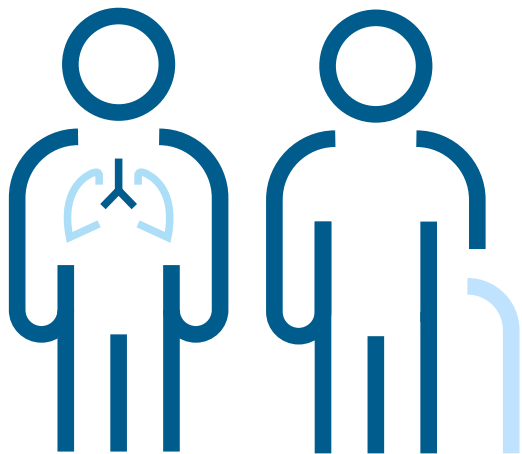


# Guidance for people at higher risk

In this guidance, we have gathered some good advice for you and your relatives if you are at higher risk of becoming severely ill from COVID-19.

4 November 2021



## Guidance for people at higher risk

With the increasing number of infections, the Danish Health Authority recommends that you, as a person at higher risk, should take extra care of yourself even if you have been fully vaccinated and have received a third vaccine dose. The vaccines offer good protection against infection and severe illness, but they are not 100% effective.

If, already before the outbreak of COVID-19 in Denmark, you took special precautions in your everyday life to avoid becoming infected with other diseases (for example due to an impaired immune system), you should continue to do so.

### The Danish Health Authority's guidance for people at higher risk

- Get vaccinated with a third dose immediately when you receive a third dose vaccine invitation in your e-Boks.
- Follow the Danish Health Authority's six general recommendations in the guidance and ask others to be considerate.
- Avoid places with many people where you cannot keep your distance.
- Consider using a face mask in public spaces if it is not possible to keep your distance.
- Consider talking to your workplace about how you can together ensure that you feel safe about going to work.

## Vaccination and third dose vaccination against COVID-19

People at higher risk who have been fully vaccinated are generally well protected against becoming infected with and severely ill from COVID-19 because the COVID-19 vaccines are very effective.

The protection of the vaccines probably decreases over time in many people. For elderly people and people with specific chronic diseases, the primary vaccination will be less effective and the effect of the vaccine will decrease more quickly.

Being vaccinated a third time will provide you with better and presumably longer protection against COVID-19. Therefore, the Danish Health Authority recommends that you get a third vaccine dose and that you book an appointment immediately when you receive the third dose vaccination invitation in your e-Boks.

You can find more information about third dose vaccination at the [Danish Health Authority's website](#) and in the pamphlet [What to do if you are going to be vaccinated with a third dose against COVID-19](#) (in Danish only).

## The Danish Health Authority's six general recommendations for how to prevent infection

People at higher risk and their relatives are recommended to pay extra attention to following the Danish Health Authority's six general recommendations for how to prevent infection.



By generally following the guidance on how to prevent infection both at home and in public spaces, the risk of infection is reduced.

Paying special attention to keeping a distance to others in public spaces is recommended. Ask others to be considerate by keeping a distance. Be especially careful about keeping your distance from people who have possible COVID-19 symptoms or who you know are at risk of being infected.

It is also important to pay attention to ventilation. Open windows and doors throughout your home for ventilation. Ventilate your home 4-5 times each day for 5-10 min. If you have a visit indoors, then ventilate more often, for example before and after visits, and preferably about once an hour if the visit lasts for more than an hour.

### Avoid places with many people

During periods with a high and increasing infection rate in society, it may be a good idea to avoid places with many people where social distancing may be difficult. This may, for example, be events where you cannot avoid being close to many people, as well as peak periods in public transport and shopping centres.

### Consider using a face mask

It may be difficult to keep a distance to others in public spaces, for example in public transport, during leisure activities and at work, without restricting your day-to-day life and social life. In these situations, you can consider using a face mask or a visor if this makes you feel safer.

Read more about the use of face masks and visors at the [Danish Health Authority's website](#).

## Specific measures at the workplace

Most people at higher risk can go to work as usual if the Danish Health Authority's guidance on how to prevent infection can be followed. This applies to both fully vaccinated and non-vaccinated persons.

Therefore, as a general rule, you do not need to be transferred to another function or work from home, even if you have contact with many people on a day-to-day basis. This also applies to pregnant women. However, it is important that you talk to your employer about whether some changes should be made in relation to your work tasks or working conditions, so that infection is prevented as much as possible, and you can feel safe when you go to work.

If you work in the healthcare, social services or nursing care sector, it is important that you use the protective equipment recommended for the various tasks.

If you are at particularly higher risk and, for example, have a combination of risk factors such as certain chronic diseases, severe obesity and pregnancy, it may be necessary to take special precautions. If necessary, you can contact your treating doctor at the hospital or your own doctor for a specific assessment of your risk at your workplace. If you have doubts about workplace conditions and your rights etc., you can get advice from trade unions and similar organisations.

Your employer is responsible for ensuring that the working environment in your workplace is generally safe.

## What does it mean to be at higher risk?

Most people who become infected with novel coronavirus will have a mild and short course of illness. The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, dry cough, loss of sense of taste and smell and difficulty breathing, from which they will recover without treatment. Especially children and young people may be infected without symptoms. Read more about symptoms of COVID-19 at the [Danish Health Authority's website](#).

Some people are at higher risk of becoming more severely ill from COVID-19. These are people with certain conditions and illnesses. The extent of the higher risk may vary greatly from person to person. It depends on both the disease(s) and/or condition(s) of the person in question. Other factors may also be of importance. For example, it is well documented that age is of great importance to how high the risk is of becoming severely ill from COVID-19.

Vaccination reduces the risk of becoming severely ill from COVID-19. Vaccination protects the individual from severe illness as well as against becoming infected and infecting others. However, you may still get infected even if you are vaccinated, as the vaccine is not 100% effective.

## Who are at higher risk of becoming severely ill from COVID-19?

In the box below, you can see who are at higher risk of becoming severely ill from COVID-19.

### People who are at higher risk of becoming severely ill from COVID-19

- **People aged 80 or above** You are at higher risk regardless of whether you are healthy or have chronic diseases and conditions.
- **People aged 65-79** Many healthy persons in this age group are not at higher risk, but if, for example, you have chronic diseases or reduced mental and physical health etc., you may be at higher risk.
- **People aged under 65** Very few people are at higher risk, but people in the age group with certain chronic diseases, chronic diseases that are difficult to control, overweight with a body mass index (BMI) of 35 or above, and/or who have a weakened immune system are thought to be at higher risk. For the majority of younger people in this group, the increased risk is lower, as age is an important factor in the risk of severe illness. This also means that younger people with an illness or condition should not compare themselves to older people who have the same or similar illness. They should instead compare themselves to healthy people of the same age.
- **Certain children and young people with chronic illness** Diseases and conditions that may result in a higher risk in adults cannot be compared directly to the risk in children. Children and young people who may have an increased risk are typically those who were already subject to special precautions before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, for example special conditions in their attendance of school/daycare. These children have diseases or conditions that are typically monitored in special outpatient clinics. Even severely ill children will typically have a mild course of illness from COVID-19.
- **Residents in nursing homes** Residents in nursing homes are at higher risk as they are often elderly and have chronic diseases, poor functional ability and fragile health.
- **Pregnant women** Pregnant women are considered to be at higher risk in order to protect both the pregnant woman and the unborn child.

If you are unsure whether you are at higher risk, please talk to your doctor.

For further details on who is at higher risk, including descriptions of the illnesses and conditions that are regarded as entailing a higher risk, see [People at higher risk if infected with COVID-19 – Medical basis \(in Danish only\)](#).

## Are you a relative of someone at higher risk?

If you are a relative of someone who is at a higher risk of becoming severely ill from COVID-19, it is natural that you may be worried about infecting the person in question. You can do several things to protect your relative(s) who is/are at higher risk – see the box below.

### Guidance if you live with someone at higher risk

- Pay attention to following the Danish Health Authority's guidance on how to prevent infection. Also help your relatives and other people you live with, including children, to remember the recommendations.
- Keep an extra close eye on symptoms that could be COVID-19. Self-isolate immediately if you experience symptoms. This also applies to mild symptoms. If you have been infected and live with a person who is at higher risk, you may be granted an out-of-home stay at a suitable facility. This also applies to close contacts who have not been fully vaccinated or previously infected in the past 12 months and who are therefore recommended to self-isolate. Please contact your municipality to learn more.

Even if you live together with someone who is at higher risk, you may participate in social contexts, go to work, etc. like you usually do. Children can also attend school or day-care centre etc. and participate in play dates, children's birthday parties, leisure activities and the like.

### Visiting someone at higher risk

As a general rule, you should always keep a distance wherever possible when visiting someone at higher risk of becoming severely ill from COVID-19 and with whom you do not have daily close contact. If this is not possible, for example because there is a need for nursing or care, consider wearing a face mask to protect the person. In this connection, you should also show consideration for the wishes of the person at higher risk in relation to whether others should wear face masks.

Remember to get tested before visiting a relative who lives in a nursing home. This also applies even if you are vaccinated or have previously been infected.

### Want to know more?

If you have any questions about your illness or need a specific assessment of your own situation, please contact your own doctor or the doctor responsible for your treatment.

Many patient organisations also have information and advice on COVID-19.

If you are a person at higher risk, you also have the possibility of being vaccinated against influenza and pneumococci. Find more information on our website.

### You can read more in the [Danish Health Authority's publications](#)