

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19)

VULNERABLE POPULATIONS AND COVID-19

While diseases can make anyone sick, some Canadians are more at risk of getting an infection and developing severe complications due to their health, social and economic circumstances.

Organizations, staff and volunteers play an important role in helping to prevent these populations from getting or spreading the COVID-19 virus. Start by sharing simple things they can do to help keep themselves and others healthy, guide them to help if they develop any signs and symptoms and learn ways help care for sick clients recovering from COVID-19.



Suggestions for supporting vulnerable populations during COVID-19 outbreaks

Vulnerable populations may include:

Anyone who is:

- ▶ An older adult
- ▶ At risk due to underlying medical conditions (e.g. heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases, cancer)
- ▶ At risk due to a compromised immune system from a medical condition or treatment (e.g. chemotherapy)



- ▶ Provide clear instructions about how to wash hands and cover coughs using:
 - The most commonly used language in the community
 - Short messages that explain simple steps they can take
 - Large font and graphics
 - Accessible instructions (e.g. braille, pictoral); and
 - By posting signs in common areas: near sinks, entrances, intake areas, restrooms, sleeping areas, recreation areas, waiting rooms
- ▶ Consider supporting alternatives such as:
 - Putting in place alternative outreach measures or a “buddy” system
 - Including policies to allow sick clients to rest in shelters during the day
 - Providing access to food, drinks and supplies, as possible
 - Reminding clients to fill or refill prescriptions, and necessary medical supplies
- ▶ If you suspect a client is sick from COVID-19, please contact your local **Public Health Authority**



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