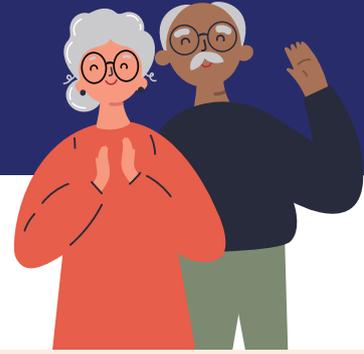


FACTSHEET



PROTECT YOURSELF FROM COVID-19

INFORMATION FOR SENIORS

How to protect yourself

Practice good hygiene

- Wash your hands regularly (for 20-30 seconds using soap and water or hand sanitiser with at least 60% alcohol).
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- When you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or cough into your elbow (throw tissues into a bin and immediately wash your hands).

Practice physical distancing

- Keep 1.5 metres apart from other people.
- Avoid shaking hands, hugging or kissing other people.
- Use 'tap and go' payments instead of cash when shopping.
- Limit visits to people at risk. Many facilities, including hospitals and aged care homes have rules and restrictions about visitors. Please check before you visit.
- Follow the current Government restrictions on group gatherings ([visit covid19.act.gov.au/what-you-can-do](https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/what-you-can-do)).

Clean your home after visitors

- Clean and disinfect frequently used surfaces such as benchtops, desks and doorknobs and objects such as mobile phones, keys, wallets and work passes.

Get tested

If you're experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, including fever, cough, sore throat or shortness of breath, make sure you get tested for COVID-19. You can call your GP or visit a COVID-19 Testing Clinic. For locations visit [covid19.act.gov.au/testing](https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/testing)

- Increase the amount of fresh air in your home by opening windows or adjusting air conditioning.
- Add a laundry sanitiser to the wash cycle of your washing machine to more effectively kill any viruses.

Download the COVIDSafe app

The COVIDSafe app is a tool for mobile phones that helps identify people exposed to COVID-19. You will need to have a modern mobile phone to load the app. To get the app, go to www.health.gov.au and search for COVIDSafe app.

Don't let yourself become isolated

It is important to stay socially connected, even while physically distancing. You can do this by staying in touch with family and friends on the phone, email, social media and online work platforms when possible. Where safe, you can still socialise with family and friends in small numbers.

If you are physically distancing, establish a daily routine with a focus on healthy eating, regular exercise and a good sleep pattern. You could take up a new hobby at home, such as gardening, writing, testing your cooking skills with new meals or some other creative project.

Wellbeing Calls are also available to anyone who is feeling lonely or isolated. You can register for a regular friendly chat with an Australian Red Cross Volunteer by calling (02) 6234 7630 between 8am and 4pm Monday to Friday.

How can I manage my personal health risk?

1. Consider your risk of contracting COVID-19 in the community

Your risk of contraction depends on how many infections there are in your local community. When the ACT has low or no cases and no evidence of community transmission, then the risk of contracting COVID-19 is low for everyone.

2. Consider whether you may suffer a more severe infection with COVID-19 because of your personal risk factors

Anyone who becomes ill with COVID-19 can develop severe symptoms, but some people are at greater risk. Your risk increases with older age (particularly for those over 70) or certain health conditions (such as if you have had an organ or bone marrow transplant, are on immune suppressive therapy, have a blood cancer such as leukaemia, or are having chemotherapy or radiotherapy) or if you are an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person.

3. Consider your daily activities and the places you visit

The COVID-19 situation can change quickly. If the number of COVID-19 cases increases in the ACT, you may need to change your activities and interactions. For example, events and workplace settings (including volunteering) may increase your risk of contracting COVID-19 illness.

You may choose to do your shopping by ordering online and having it delivered to your home.

But don't put off attending health appointments. Health care services have

hygiene and physical distancing measure in place to keep you safe. Many also offer telehealth (online or over-the-phone appointments) so you can still get health advice and prescriptions without leaving home.

4. Develop your own COVID-19 Action Plan

An action plan can help you plan what you will do to reduce your risk of getting sick. You can start your action plan by:

- speaking to your GP to get a better idea of your risk
- weighing up the risk of activities against what is important to you
- looking for different activities to enjoy which have a lower risk of exposure
- staying up-to-date with how many COVID-19 cases there are in your local community
- planning how you will change your activities if COVID-19 cases increase.

You can get a COVID-19 action plan template online or by contacting the Council on the Ageing (see below).

Where to get more information?

You can call the Council on The Ageing (COTA) ACT's Seniors Information Line to get advice on **6282 3777** from Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. You can also visit the COTA ACT website at www.cotaact.org.au



For more general information and to stay up-to-date with the COVID-19 situation, visit

www.covid19.act.gov.au or the ACT Health Facebook page. For information on support for those at risk, including food relief, visit www.csd.gov.au

If you need medical help for routine medical issues, or advice about your risk of serious infection, please contact your GP.

For all emergency medical issues contact 000.