

Connecticut's High Risk Population for COVID-19

March, 2020

The COVID-19 outbreak began in Connecticut with the first case confirmed on March 8, 2020. The disease was named "coronavirus disease 2019", and then abbreviated COVID-19. This fact sheet uses Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) definitions to provide an outlook for the Connecticut populations at greatest risk, and data from the Connecticut Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (CT BRFSS).

Who Is At Higher Risk for COVID-19?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) based their definition of high-risk on early information out of China, where the COVID-19 epidemic began, that showed certain populations were at higher risk of getting sick from this illness or having more complications.

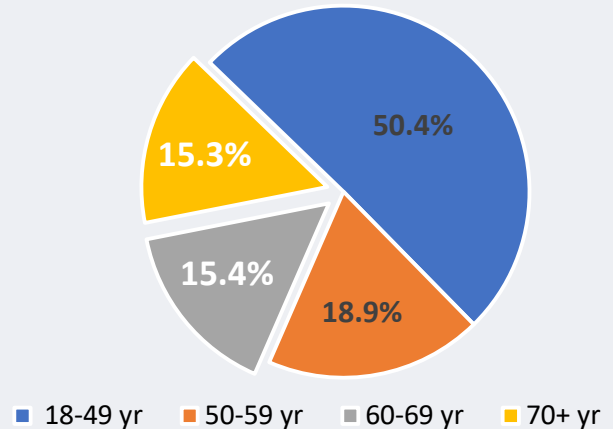
Those at higher risk include:

- **Older Adults**
- People who have **high-risk chronic medical conditions** like:
 - Heart Disease
 - Diabetes
 - Lung Disease

Connecticut's Older Adults

According to the CT BRFSS, approximately 30% of Connecticut's population is age 60 or older, that's **about 845,000 Connecticut adults**.

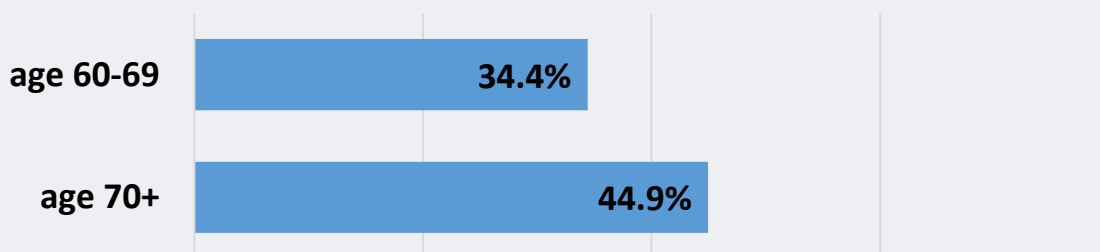
Connecticut's Estimated Adult Population, by age category, 2018



High Risk Medical Conditions in Connecticut's Older Adults

The CT BRFSS collects information on chronic disease in the population. This allows for us to determine how many adults in Connecticut have high-risk medical conditions, which includes lung disease (like asthma or COPD), cardiovascular disease, or diabetes.

CT Adults With High-Risk Medical Conditions, by Age Group



Among CT adults that are already considered at-risk for COVID-19 complications because of their age (age 60 and older), some are at an even more increased risk because they have high-risk medical conditions. That equates to **about 335,000 Connecticut adults**.

Protecting Connecticut's Vulnerable Populations from COVID-19

Knowing that certain people are at higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19, it is especially important for all Connecticut residents to take actions to reduce not only their own risk of getting sick, but to protect the most vulnerable. In addition to practicing social distancing, here are some recommendations according to the CDC:

Protect yourself:

- Clean your hands often
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily

Protect others:

- Cover your coughs and sneezes
- Stay home if you're sick
- Wear a facemask if you are sick

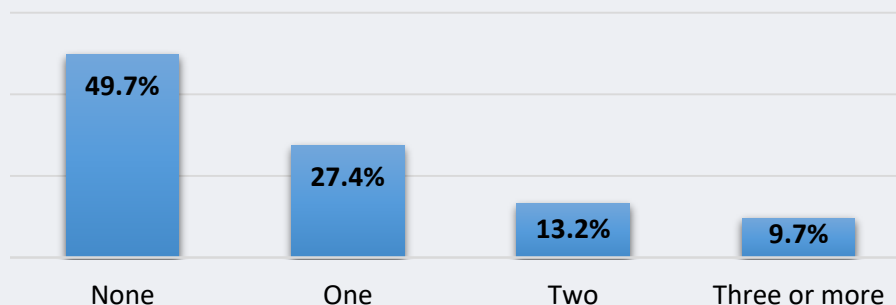
What is Social Distancing?

Social distancing will protect *you and others* by taking everyday precautions to keep sufficient space between people. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to the COVID-19 virus. Avoid crowds as much as possible. When you go out in public, keep away from others who are sick, limit close contact and wash your hands often. During a COVID-19 outbreak in your community, **stay home as much as possible** to further reduce your risk of being exposed, and risk to others.

Chronic Conditions in Connecticut's Population

In any age group, having comorbid conditions, that is, two or more chronic diseases or conditions, makes someone at increased risk of complications from COVID-19. The CT BRFS allows us to determine how many adults in Connecticut have comorbid chronic conditions. Comorbidity was calculated based on the following BRFS indicators of chronic disease conditions: asthma, COPD, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, kidney diseases, cancer, arthritis and depression. In Connecticut, about **650,000 Connecticut adults have comorbid conditions** (2 or more).

Number of Comorbid Conditions Among CT Adults



For more information on COVID-19 in Connecticut, please visit www.ct.gov/coronavirus.
For more information on the CT BRFS, please visit www.ct.gov/DPH/BRFS.

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