



## DEEPER DIVE

# Group 4 – Adults at Higher Risk for Exposure and Increased Risk of Severe Illness (Higher-Risk Conditions and Additional Congregate Settings)

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### COVID-19 Vaccinations: Your best shot at stopping COVID-19

A tested, safe and effective vaccine will be available to all who want it, but supplies will be limited at first. To save lives and slow the spread of COVID-19, independent state and federal public health advisory committees recommend first protecting health care workers caring for patients with COVID-19, people who are at the highest risk of being hospitalized or dying and those at high risk of exposure to COVID-19. Our goal is to vaccinate as many people as possible given the limited supply of vaccines.

Keep practicing the 3 Ws— wear a mask, wait six feet apart, wash your hands—until everyone has a chance to get vaccinated.

#### Group 4: Adults at High Risk for Exposure and Increased Risk of Severe Illness (High-Risk Conditions and Additional Congregate Settings)

North Carolina will move to Group 4 on March 17, beginning with people with high-risk medical conditions, people experiencing homelessness, and incarcerated people who have not been vaccinated. North Carolina plans to move to other essential workers and other people in close group living settings on April 7. Some vaccine providers may not be ready to open to Group 4 on this date if they are still experiencing high demand for vaccines in Groups 1 through 3.

#### PEOPLE 16-64 YEARS OLD WITH ONE OR MORE HIGH-RISK MEDICAL CONDITIONS FOR SEVERE DISEASE FROM COVID-19

This population includes anyone with conditions that have been identified by the [CDC](#) as increasing risk for severe COVID-19 illness. The CDC may update the list of high-risk conditions as scientists learn more about COVID-19. NCDHHS will update the list accordingly:

- Asthma (moderate to severe)
- Cancer
- Cerebrovascular disease or history of stroke
- Chronic kidney disease
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- Cystic fibrosis
- Diabetes type 1 or 2
- A heart condition such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, cardiomyopathy
- Hypertension or high blood pressure
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from: immune deficiencies, HIV, taking chronic steroids or other immune weakening medicines, history of solid organ blood or bone marrow transplant



- Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, including Down Syndrome
- Liver disease, including hepatitis
- Neurologic conditions, such as dementia and schizophrenia
- Pulmonary fibrosis
- Overweight or obesity
- Pregnancy
- Sickle cell disease (not including sickle cell trait) or thalassemia
- Smoking (current or former, defined as having smoked at least 100 cigarettes in their lifetime)

### **PEOPLE LIVING IN A CLOSE GROUP LIVING SETTING**

This population includes anyone who is living in congregate or close group living settings who is not already vaccinated due to age, medical condition or job function, including:

- People experiencing homelessness or living in a homeless shelter
- Correctional facility, such as jail or prison