

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Online COVID-19 Visit Risk Calculator Can Help Kids & Adults Stay Safe this Back-to-School and Upcoming Holiday Season

TORONTO, September 14, 2021 — As schools across the country open their doors to students, many children and adults will face new potential exposures to COVID-19. A free online risk calculator, called [My COVID-19 Visit Risk Calculator](#), can help individuals and families to quickly assess their risk of exposure to COVID-19 when meeting or gathering with others. This tool, created by the National Institute on Ageing (NIA) in collaboration with leading public health and infectious disease experts, was funded in part by the Government of Canada.

The online assessment, available at COVIDVisitRisk.com, takes approximately three minutes to complete and has helped more than 120,000 Canadians to make the best possible decisions for themselves and their families about how to lower their risk of getting COVID-19. Through a short series of questions, it provides users with information about their potential risk of exposure to COVID-19 when visiting with others. In addition to guidance provided by public health officials, this information can be used to help Canadians make safer choices when gathering with others for the duration of the pandemic.

"This fall, many students are heading back to physical classrooms and many adults are returning to brick-and-mortar workplaces, while people of all ages are looking forward to getting together with loved ones throughout the forthcoming holiday season. This tool can support people of all ages and in all states of health, to make more informed decisions about meeting up with others during the pandemic," says Dr. Samir Sinha, NIA Director of Health Policy Research. "Using the best available scientific evidence, the tool provides a series of questions and then assigns an individual risk level in accordance with the details of the gathering an individual is considering attending. It also shares current public health advice on how to meet more safely with others."

With 74% of Canada's population having received at least one COVID-19 vaccine, real strides have been made in curbing the spread of the virus. However, with the emergence of the highly contagious Delta-variant, the re-opening of schools and the reduction of public health measures, COVID-19 remains an important public health issue. Vigilance and careful consideration remain critical when visiting, gathering, or meeting with others.

Public health guidelines vary across provinces and territories, as well as in different communities across the country. In addition to local and regional public health guidelines, [COVIDVisitRisk.com](https://www.covidvisitrisk.com) can support individuals to make informed decisions about whether or not to gather and how to do so as safely as possible.

"With many Canadians partially and fully vaccinated, it remains vital to minimize the risks of COVID-19 transmission when getting together in person," says Michael Nicin, Executive Director at the NIA. "More than 120,000 individuals and families have already leveraged this resource to increase their understanding about the risks of getting COVID-19 during a planned gathering. It also includes current information on how to minimize risks when meeting in person in order to better protect their health, safety and well-being."

In addition to the online risk calculator, a comprehensive decision aid is also available on [COVIDVisitRisk.com](https://www.covidvisitrisk.com), which provides a more detailed assessment of potential COVID-19 exposure risks. By accessing these tools, Canadians can make the best possible decisions for themselves and their families about how to lower their risk of getting COVID-19, while also contributing to the safety of all.

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The National Institute on Ageing is a Ryerson University think tank focused on the realities of Canada's ageing population. Follow us on Twitter [@RyersonNIA](https://twitter.com/RyersonNIA) & [@NSS Now](https://twitter.com/NSSNow).

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