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NEWS RELEASE

## Online Tool Helps Evaluate Personal Risk as COVID-19 Restrictions Lift

**TORONTO, March 21, 2022** — With COVID-19 restrictions lifting across Canada, Canadians are now left to evaluate their own risk of gathering with others as the pandemic continues. Yet, evaluating one's personal risk is not so simple. There are many factors to consider when assessing personal risks. It's not a simple 'yes' or 'no', 'safe' or 'unsafe' answer. Factors include one's personal health status, vaccination status, where and how they plan to visit, and more.

"Vulnerable groups such as older adults are now being asked to decide for themselves which risks they are willing to take. It's critical to provide these individuals with tools and resources they will need to evaluate and educate themselves on their risk as public health measures lift," said Dr. Sinha, Director of Health Policy Research at the National Institute on Ageing. "It doesn't make sense to hermetically seal older persons and other vulnerable persons off from the rest of the society. We need to empower them visit more safely with others."

[My COVID-19 Visit Risk Calculator](#), a free online tool, can help individuals and families to do exactly that—evaluate their personal risk of gathering with others as restrictions lift. The tool allows users to quickly assess their risk of exposure to COVID-19 during visits, parties and meetings—in only three minutes. The 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 tool has attracted over 1 million users, and has become increasingly important for groups who are at higher risk of infection, hospitalization and mortality due to COVID-19. Risk fundamentally differs within subgroups of the Canadian population. While provinces and territories lift restrictions and place the onus of risk assessments on individuals, the burden of these risk assessments may disproportionately fall more on certain groups in Canada who are at higher risk of infection and serious outcomes, with older adults being one, given 90 per cent of COVID-19 related deaths to date have been among older adults.

After completing a short series of questions, [My COVID-19 Visit Risk](#) users are provided with information about their potential risk of exposure to COVID-19 and current public health guidance to visit as safely as possible. In addition to the online risk calculator, a comprehensive decision aid is also available on [COVIDVisitRisk.com](#), which provides a more detailed assessment of potential

COVID-19 exposure risks. By accessing these tools, individuals 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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***About The National Institute on Ageing***

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](#) and support our call for a National Seniors Strategy [@NSS Now](#).

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