



COVID-19 At Risk

Whitley County



Kentucky: By The Numbers is a program in the Department of Community and Leadership Development and the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service at the University of Kentucky. For more information contact your local Cooperative Extension office or Dr. Julie N. Zimmerman, Professor of Rural Sociology, Department of Community and Leadership Development, 500 Garrigus Building, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY 40546-0215. email: jzimm@uky.edu.

County Population¹

	2018
Total Population	36,242
19 and under	10,383
20-49 Years	13,338
50-64 Years	6,742
65-79 Years	4,515
80 Years and over	1,264
Race and Ethnicity	
% White	95.9%
% Black or African American	0.8%
% Hispanic	1.3%
% Asian	0.4%
% American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, Other Pacific Islander	0.3%
% Two or More Races	1.3%

Health

% Adults Reporting Fair or Poor Health (2016-2018) ³	31.4% (23.3%-41.0%)
% Adults Reporting 14 or more days of Poor Physical Health per Month (2017) ⁴	17.4% (16.9%-18.0%)
% Adults with Asthma (2016-2018) ³	20.2% (12.8%-30.3%)
% Adults with Diabetes (2016-2018) ³	16.5% (9.6%-26.9%)
% Adults with Hypertension (2015-2017) ³	42.4% (33.4%-52.0%)
% Adults with Obesity (2016-2018) ³	37.0% (28.3%-46.6%)
% Adults who are Current Smokers (2016-2018) ³	31.6% (23.6%-40.8%)

Aging Population¹

	2018
Population Ages 65 and over	5,779
% of Total Population 65 and over	15.9%
Females Ages 65 and over	3,180
Males Ages 65 and over	2,599
Population Ages 85 and over	568
Females Ages 85 and over	383
Males Ages 85 and over	185
Veterans	
# Ages 65-74 who are Veterans	772 (+/- 132)
# Ages 75 and over who are Veterans	499 (+/- 145)

Grandparents²

	2014-2018
All Grandparents living with own Grandchildren under 18	973 (+/- 293)
# of Grandparents who Live with <u>and are Responsible</u> for Grandchildren	642 (+/- 250)
% of Grandparents Living with <u>and Responsible</u> for Grandchildren and are in the Labor Force	37.7% (+/- 17.4%)

Living Arrangements

	2014-2018
# of Households with 1 or more People Ages 65 and over ²	3,714 (+/ 179)
# Ages 65+ Females Living Alone ²	801 (+/- 159)
# Ages 65+ Males Living Alone ²	439 (+/- 158)
# of Nursing Homes, Personal Care Homes, and Assisted Living Facilities ⁵	4

For help in understanding the number in parentheses, see

“And Now for the Grain of Salt:

Margins of Error and the American Community Survey” at

<https://kybtn.ca.uky.edu/content/publications>

Data Sources

1. 2018 Population Estimates. U.S. Census Bureau. <https://data.census.gov>
2. 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. U.S. Census Bureau. <https://data.census.gov>
3. Kentucky Health Facts (BRFSS). Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky. <http://www.kentuckyhealthfacts.org/>
4. County Health Rankings (BRFSS). Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/>
5. Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data request and <https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/os/oig/dhc/Pages/hcf.aspx>





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Groups at Risk for Complications from COVID-19

Amy Kostelic, Adult Development and Aging Extension Specialist

According to the CDC (2020), people of all ages, especially those with underlying medical conditions are at higher risk for Covid-19 and severe illness, particularly if the underlying medical conditions are not well controlled. This is because Covid-19 is a "novel virus"— meaning it is a new virus to which people have never been previously exposed and therefore do not have immunity. As scientists work to learn more about it, they recognize that while nearly everyone will be exposed to it at some point, most people will not develop a serious or life-threatening illness (CDC, 2020). But, like any illness affecting older adults and people with compromised immune systems, Covid-19 becomes challenging to fight and leaves at risk individuals who become infected more susceptible to serious complications making it more difficult to recover.

Who is Most at Risk?

The following groups are at greater risk for Covid-19 (CDC, 2020; WebMD, 2020):

- Older adults:
 - Increased risk begins around age 50 and keeps going up with age. The highest risk of serious illness and death is for people 80+ years old. At particular risk are older adults with chronic disease.
- People who live in nursing homes or long-term care facilities.
- People with lung disease:
 - Asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), Emphysema, pulmonary hypertension, and smokers.
- People with heart and blood vessel disease:
 - Serious heart conditions, history of heart attack and stroke, chronic heart failure, heart valve disease, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, peripheral artery disease, heart rhythm conditions (e.g., atrial fibrillation).
- People with other immunocompromised issues including:
 - Cancer treatments, HIV/AIDS, bone marrow and organ transplants, high doses of steroids, immune weakening medication for autoimmune conditions, severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher), diabetes (all types), chronic kidney disease/dialysis, liver disease.

Sources

CDC. (2020). People who need to take extra precautions. Retrieved <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/index.html>
 WebMD. (2020). Who's most at risk from coronavirus? Retrieved <https://www.webmd.com/lung/news/20200318/whos-most-at-risk-from-coronavirus#3>

**More information and resources on COVID-19
are available through your County Extension Office or online at:**

kycovid19.ky.gov

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

