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NEWS RELEASE

## COVIDVisitRisk.com Helps Evaluate Risk of Getting COVID-19 as Summer Events & Gatherings Return in Full Swing

**TORONTO, August 3, 2022** — With COVID-19 restrictions being lifted across much of the country, and summer events and gatherings back in full swing, it might be tempting to think the pandemic is over. But the SARs-CoV-2 virus continues to circulate widely across Canada, with a high prevalence of the Omicron variant and rising rates of its subvariants (such as BA.3, BA.4 and BA.5). For these reasons, personal risk assessment has become even more important. The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) cautions that in the absence of official regulations, Canadians should make their own decisions about which [individual public health measures](#) to take to reduce their risks.

But this isn't always easy — the risk of getting COVID-19 from gathering with others depends on several factors, including whether attendees will be wearing well-fitting masks, whether the setting is indoors or outdoors and the vaccination status of those attending. To take the confusion out of evaluating personal risk, the NIA has created [My COVID-19 Visit Risk Calculator](#), a free online tool that can help individuals and families make the best choices for their health and the health of their loved ones and communities.

This tool allows users to quickly assess their potential risk of getting 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.

After completing a short series of questions, [My COVID-19 Visit Risk](#) users are provided with information about their potential risk of getting 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 risks.

Why is individual risk assessment so important? [PHAC explains](#):

1. COVID-19 will continue to spread at different levels in our communities, and outbreaks will still occur;
2. New variants of concern may also emerge;
3. It is not yet certain how long immunity from vaccination and previous infection lasts;

4. Some settings will continue to be higher risk, including crowded and poorly ventilated public spaces. The risk is higher if activities like singing, shouting or physical activity that makes people breathe heavily are occurring;
5. The consequences of COVID-19 transmission may be greater in some populations and settings. These include people in group living settings and those at risk of more severe outcomes. Following individual public health measures helps to protect these populations.

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### **About The National Institute on Ageing**

The [National Institute on Ageing](#) is a Toronto Metropolitan University think tank focused on the realities of Canada's ageing population. Follow us on Twitter [@NIAgeing](#) and support our call for a National Seniors Strategy [@NSS Now](#).

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