

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY



SPOR Evidence Alliance
Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research

Alliance pour des données
probantes de la SRAP
Stratégie de recherche axée sur le patient

Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research

SPOR
Putting Patients First

Preventing respiratory illness in older adults aged 60 years and above living in long-term care: A rapid overview of reviews

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Summary

We reviewed ways to prevent and manage respiratory illnesses, such as medicine, protective clothing, and hand washing. We reviewed how these ways were used on their own and together.

The results tell us that some antiviral medicines used with protective clothing can prevent respiratory illness. Other ways did not clearly prevent respiratory illness in long-term care homes.

There was no research on older adults in long-term care homes with respiratory virus illness and other severe health conditions. There was also no research on how long-term care homes handle respiratory illness in low- and middle-income countries or in different cultures.

What does this mean?

More research is needed on ways to prevent respiratory viruses, especially for people with many health conditions, for those who live in low- and middle-income countries, and for people from different cultures.

Citation: Rios P, Radhakrishnan A, Thomas SM, Darvesh N, Straus SE, Tricco AC. Preventing respiratory illness in older adults aged 60 years and above living in long-term care [preprint]. medRxiv. 2020.
<https://doi.org/10.1101/2020.03.19.20039081>.

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What is the current situation?

The World Health Organization (WHO) asked how to prevent and manage respiratory virus illness in adults aged 60 and older living in long-term care settings, such as nursing homes, long-term care hospitals, and assisted living facilities. Common respiratory viruses include the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the flu.

What questions did we aim to answer in our research?

- How do long-term care settings prevent and manage respiratory virus illness in adults aged 60 and older?
- How do long-term care settings prevent and manage respiratory virus illness for adults aged 60 and older who have many severe health conditions compared to those without these conditions?
- How do long-term care settings prevent and manage respiratory virus illness in low- and middle-income countries compared to high-income countries? Do the long-term care settings handle respiratory illness differently in different cultures?

How did we approach these questions?

- The WHO took part in the research and helped explain the questions, findings, and report.
- We searched online databases and websites for research on ways to control and prevent respiratory viruses in older adults living in long-term care.

What answers did we find from our research?

- **Ways to prevent and manage respiratory illness in long-term care homes:** some antiviral medicine and protective clothing used together can help prevent getting sick from respiratory illnesses.
- The research looked at other ways to prevent getting a respiratory illness, such as hand washing, wearing protective clothing, staying away from others, and other medicine. On their own, these ways did not clearly prevent respiratory illness.
- **None** of the research looked at issues that affect older adults in long-term care with respiratory virus illness and many severe health conditions.
- **None** of the research looked at how long-term care homes handle respiratory illness in low- and middle-income countries or in different cultures.

How confident are we in these findings?

There are some limits to our findings. For example, only one person reviewed and summarized the studies. However, we chose this approach to meet WHO's needs and provide results quickly.