



## INFECTION CONTROL RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CDC FOR THE HOLIDAYS

As many people in the United States begin to plan for fall and winter holiday celebrations, CDC offers the following considerations to help protect individuals and their families, friends, and communities from COVID-19. These considerations are meant to supplement—not replace—any state, local, territorial, or tribal health and safety laws, rules, and regulations with which holiday gatherings must comply.

### PEOPLE WHO SHOULD NOT ATTEND IN-PERSON HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

#### **People with or exposed to COVID-19**

Do not host or participate in any in-person festivities if you or anyone in your household:

- Has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and has not met the criteria for when it is safe to be around others
- Has symptoms of COVID-19
- Is waiting for COVID-19 viral test results
- May have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days
- Is at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19

#### **People at increased risk for severe illness**

If you are at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19, or live or work with someone at increased risk of severe illness, you should:

- Avoid in-person gatherings with people who do not live in your household.
- Avoid larger gatherings and consider attending activities that pose lower risk (as described throughout this page) if you decide to attend an in-person gathering with people who do not live in your household.

### HOSTING A HOLIDAY GATHERING

If you will be hosting a celebration, follow CDC tips for hosting gatherings. Below are some additional considerations for hosting a holiday celebration:

- Host outdoor activities rather than indoor activities as much as possible. If hosting an outdoor event is not possible, and you choose to host an indoor event, avoid crowded, poorly ventilated, or fully enclosed indoor spaces.
- Increase ventilation by opening windows and doors to the extent that is safe and feasible based on the weather.
- Host activities with only people from your local area as much as possible.
- Limit numbers of attendees as much as possible.

- Provide updated information to your guests about any COVID-19 safety guidelines and steps in place to prevent the spread of the virus.
- Provide or encourage attendees to bring supplies to help you and others stay healthy (example - extra masks, hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, tissues).
- In-person holiday gatherings with people outside of your household, consider asking all guests to strictly avoid contact with people outside of their households for 14 days before the gathering.

## ATTENDING A HOLIDAY GATHERING

If you will be attending a celebration that someone else is hosting, follow CDC Considerations for attending an event or gathering. Below are some additional considerations for attending an in-person holiday gathering:

- Outdoor activities are safer than indoor activities. If participating in an outdoor event is not possible, and you choose to attend an indoor event, avoid crowded, poorly ventilated, and fully enclosed indoor spaces. Increase ventilation by opening windows and doors to the extent that is safe and feasible based on the weather.
- Check with the event host, organizer, or event venue for updated information about any COVID-19 safety guidelines and if they have steps in place to prevent the spread of the virus.
- Bring supplies to help you and others stay healthy. For example, bring extra masks (do not share or swap with others), hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, and tissues.
- If you are planning to attend in-person holiday gatherings with people outside of your household, consider strictly avoiding contact with people outside of your household for 14 days before the gathering.

## Get your flu vaccine

Gatherings can contribute to the spread of other infectious diseases. Getting a flu vaccine is an essential part of protecting your health and your family's health this season.

## During the celebration

Follow these tips to reduce your risk of being exposed to, getting, or spreading COVID-19 during the celebration:

### ***Social distance and limit close contact***

- Maintain a distance of at least 6 feet or more from people you don't live with. Be particularly mindful in areas where it may harder to keep this distance, such as restrooms and eating areas.
- Avoid using restroom facilities at high traffic times, such as at the end of a public event.
- Avoid busy eating areas, such as restaurants during high volume mealtimes, if you plan to eat out at a restaurant.
- Minimize gestures that promote close contact. For example, do not shake hands, bump elbows, or give hugs. Instead wave and verbally greet others.

## ***Wear masks***

- Wear a mask at all times when around people who don't live in your household to reduce the risk of spreading the virus.
- Avoid singing, chanting, or shouting, especially when not wearing a mask and within 6 feet of others.



### ***Limit contact with commonly touched surfaces or shared items***

- Clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces and any shared items between use when feasible. Use EPA-approved disinfectants.
- Use touch-less garbage cans if available. Use gloves when removing garbage bags or handling and disposing of trash. Wash hands after removing gloves.

### ***Wash hands***

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.

### ***Keep safe around food and drinks***

- Make sure everyone washes their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds before and after preparing, serving, and eating food. Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Instead of potluck-style gatherings, encourage guests to bring food and drinks for themselves and for members of their own household only.
- Limit people going in and out of the areas where food is being prepared or handled, such as in the kitchen or around the grill, if possible.
- Wear a mask while preparing or serving food to others who don't live in your household.
- If serving any food, consider having one person serve all the food so that multiple people are not handling the serving utensils.
- Use single-use options or identify one person to serve sharable items, like salad dressings, food containers, plates and utensils, and condiments.
- Avoid any self-serve food or drink options, such as buffets or buffet-style potlucks, salad bars, and condiment or drink stations. Use grab-and-go meal options, if available.
- If you choose to use any items that are reusable (e.g., seating covers, tablecloths, linen napkins), wash and disinfect them after the event.
- Look for healthy food and beverage options, such as fruits and vegetables, lean proteins, whole grains, and low or no-calorie beverages, at holiday gatherings to help maintain good health.

### ***After the celebration***

If you participated in higher risk activities or think that you may have been exposed during your celebration, take extra precautions (in addition the ones listed above) for 14 days after the event to protect others:

- Stay home as much as possible.
- Avoid being around people at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
- Consider getting tested for COVID-19.

If you develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19, such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath, or if you test positive for COVID-19, immediately contact the host and others that attended the event or celebration that you attended. They may need to inform other attendees about their possible exposure to the virus. Contact your health care provider and follow the CDC-recommended steps for what to do if you become sick, and follow the public health recommendations for community-related exposure.



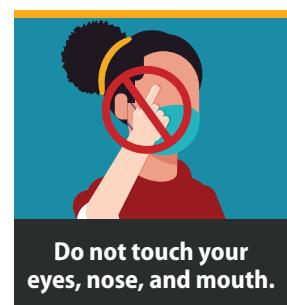
If you are waiting for your COVID-19 test results, stay home until you have a result, and follow CDC's guidance to help stop the spread of COVID-19.

If you have been diagnosed with COVID-19, a public health worker may contact you to check on your health and ask you who you have been in contact with and where you've spent time in order to identify and provide support to people (contacts) who may have been infected.

## HOLIDAY TRAVEL

Traveling increases the chance of getting and spreading COVID-19. Staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others. Use information from the following websites to decide whether to go on holiday travel:

- [Travel During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [Know Your Travel Risk](#)
- [Know When to Delay Your Travel to Avoid Spreading COVID-19](#)



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