

COVID-19: Tips on Getting Together Safely

COVID-19 is on the rise in New York City. Gathering with other people, especially indoors, increases the risk of spreading COVID-19. You should not host or attend a gathering. But if you are going to meet up with others, remember these tips to stay safe.

Always practice four key actions to prevent COVID-19 transmission:

- **Stay home:** Stay home if you are not feeling well, tested positive for COVID-19, have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, or were recently traveling.
- **Stay apart:** Keep at least 6 feet from people who are not members of your household.
- **Wear a face covering:** Protect those around you. Wear a face covering indoors and outdoors. Face coverings reduce the spread of COVID-19, especially if you are sick and do not have symptoms. See [FAQ about Face Coverings](#) for more information.
- **Keep your hands clean:** Wash your hands often or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands and cover your coughs and sneezes.

Safer gathering

- **Know your own risk.** If you are an older adult or have a health condition that increases your risk of severe COVID-19, consider staying home.
- **Know others' risk.** Only meet up with people you know are careful about using a face covering and keeping at least 6 feet from others.
- **Keep it small.** The more people that gather close together, especially indoors, the greater the risk of COVID-19.
- **Keep it short.** The longer the gathering, the greater the risk of COVID-19.
- **Keep it down.** Avoid shouting and singing, as these activities increase the spread of particles that may infect others.
- **Stick to a pandemic "social bubble."** Limit in-person gatherings to a core group of friends or family to reduce exposure to people outside your immediate group.
- **Do not travel.** Many parts of the country and outside the U.S. have high levels of COVID-19. Stay local. If you do travel, make sure you know the quarantine requirements at your destination and when you get back home. See [What You Need to Know about Traveling During COVID-19](#) for information on New York State quarantine requirements.
- **Outdoors is safer.** Bundle up and gather outside. COVID-19 spreads most easily indoors because there is less air circulation, people may be closer to each other, and the temperature and humidity may help spread the virus more easily. This is especially true in winter when doors and windows are shut.
- **Worship safely.** Attending indoor services can be risky since it often involves many people in a restricted space, along with activities like singing. Join online services or worship outdoors instead. If you attend in-person services, wear a face covering, bring and use alcohol-based hand sanitizer, sit only with members of your household and keep at least 6 feet from others (12 feet if there will be singing), and do not share cups, books or religious objects. Avoid shaking hands and hugging.
- **Bring your own (BYO).** Sharing a beverage or passing food around may spread the virus. Avoid sharing cups, plates and utensils with others.

- **Be prepared.** If you have people over, stock up on extra face coverings and hand sanitizer to offer guests.
- **Be creative.** Think of games that can be played farther apart and do not involve any physical contact, like charades. See [Tips for a Safer Holiday Season](#) for more ideas.

Safer sports

- **Run, walk, bicycle.** These are good sports to do alone or with someone else, but keep at least 6 feet from others or wear a face covering.
- **Enjoy winter sports.** If we get some snow, enjoy snowshoeing or sledding.
- **Avoid team sports.** Team sports involve close contact with others which increases the risk of transmission. Frisbee and catch are safer since you can maintain distance from other players.
- **Wash up.** Wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after playing sports. Do not touch your face while playing.

Get tested and know what your test results mean. See [COVID-19 Testing: Frequently Asked Questions](#) for more information.

- **Get tested.** All New Yorkers should get tested. Visit nyc.gov/covidtest, call **311** or text “COVID TEST” to **855-48** to find a testing location. Many sites offer no-cost testing.
- **Diagnostic tests.** Some tests are more accurate than others. Talk to your health care provider about the type of test you received and what the result means. If you test positive or were recently exposed to someone with COVID-19, you must stay home and take precautions to reduce the risk of spreading the virus to others, even if you test negative.
- **Antibody tests.** A positive result means that antibodies were detected in your blood and that you likely had COVID-19 at some point in the past. However, it is possible to get COVID-19 again, so it is still important to take precautions.

Educate and protect each other.

- **Educate others.** Remind others about the four key actions to prevent COVID-19 transmission: stay home, stay apart, wear a face covering, and keep your hands clean. Visit coronavirus.health.ny.gov for updates on statewide COVID-19 restrictions, including the number of people who can gather together safely indoors and outdoors.
- **Be polite.** Support healthy behavior. If you see someone not wearing a face covering, ask, “Could you please wear a face covering near me?” rather than getting angry. If someone is too close, politely ask, “Can you please give me some space?”
- **Do not be judgmental.** Rather than judge others for having in-person interactions, support them to do so safely.
- **Look out for your friends and neighbors.** Check in on people who are more isolated, are older, or may have a health condition putting them at greater risk for severe COVID-19. If you are not sick and not at greater risk, offer to run errands for others if they cannot leave their home.

The NYC Health Department may change recommendations as the situation evolves.

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