

# COVID-19

**ACT NOW!**



## How to Protect Yourself & Others

Updated Jan. 30, 2021

[Print](#)

### Three Important Ways to Slow the Spread

- Wear a [mask](#) to protect yourself and others and stop the spread of COVID-19.
- [Stay at least 6 feet \(about 2 arm lengths\)](#) from others who don't live with you.
- Avoid crowds. The more people you are in contact with, the more likely you are to be exposed to COVID-19.

Cases in the last 7 days

**1,045,440**



### Wear a mask

- Everyone 2 and older should wear masks in public.
- Masks should be worn in addition to staying at least 6 feet apart, especially around people who don't live with you.
- If someone in your household is infected, people in the household [should take precautions including wearing masks to avoid spread to others](#).
- [Wash your hands](#) or use hand sanitizer before putting on your mask.
- Wear your mask over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin.
- Fit the mask snugly against the sides of your face, slipping the loops over your ears or tying the strings behind your head.
- If you have to continually adjust your mask, it doesn't fit properly, and you might need to find a different mask type or brand.
- Make sure you can breathe easily.

Effective February 2, 2021, [masks are required](#) on planes, buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation traveling into, within, or out of the United States and in U.S. transportation hubs such as airports and stations.



## Stay 6 feet away from others

- **Inside your home:** Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
  - If possible, maintain 6 feet between the person who is sick and other household members.
- **Outside your home:** Put 6 feet of distance between yourself and people who don't live in your household.
  - Remember that some people without symptoms may be able to spread virus.
  - Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arm lengths) from other people.
  - Keeping distance from others is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.

## Avoid crowds

- Being in crowds like in restaurants, bars, fitness centers, or movie theaters put you at higher risk for COVID-19.

## Avoid poorly ventilated spaces

- Avoid indoor spaces that do not offer fresh air from the outdoors as much as possible. If indoors, bring in fresh air by opening windows and doors, if possible.



## Wash your hands often

- **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.
- It's especially important to wash:
  - Before eating or preparing food
  - Before touching your face
  - After using the restroom
  - After leaving a public place
  - After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
  - After handling your mask
  - After changing a diaper
  - After caring for someone sick
  - After touching animals or pets
- 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.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth** with unwashed hands.



## Cover coughs and sneezes

- **Always cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow and do not spit.
- **Throw used tissues** in the trash.
- Immediately **wash your hands** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.



## Clean and disinfect

- **Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily**. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
- **If surfaces are dirty, clean them**. Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- **Then, use a household disinfectant**. Use products from [EPA's List N: Disinfectants for Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) [↗](#) according to manufacturer's labeled directions.



## Monitor Your Health Daily

- **Be alert for symptoms.** Watch for fever, cough, shortness of breath, or [other symptoms of COVID-19](#).
  - Especially important if you are [running essential errands](#), going into the office or workplace, and in settings where it may be difficult to keep a [physical distance of 6 feet](#).
- **Take your temperature** if symptoms develop.
  - Don't take your temperature within 30 minutes of exercising or after taking medications that could lower your temperature, like acetaminophen.
- Follow [CDC guidance](#) if symptoms develop.

## Get Vaccinated to Protect Against COVID-19

- [COVID-19 vaccination](#) is especially important for people who may be more likely to get very sick from COVID-19, such as older adults and people with certain medical conditions.
- People with underlying medical conditions may get a COVID-19 vaccine as long as they have not had [a severe or immediate allergic reaction](#) to the first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine or any of the ingredients in a COVID-19 vaccine. CDC has made recommendations on [who should get vaccinated first](#).



## Protect Your Health This Flu Season

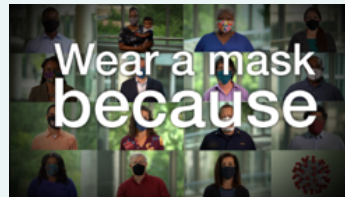
It's likely that flu viruses and the virus that causes COVID-19 will **both** spread this fall and winter. Healthcare systems could be overwhelmed treating both patients with flu and patients with COVID-19. This means getting a flu vaccine during 2020-2021 is more important than ever.

While getting a flu vaccine will not protect against COVID-19 there are many important benefits, such as:

1. Flu vaccines have been shown to reduce the risk of flu illness, hospitalization, and death.
2. Getting a flu vaccine can also save healthcare resources for the care of patients with COVID-19.

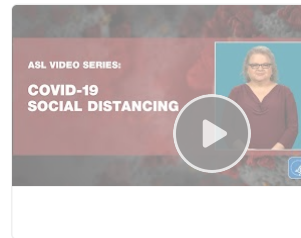
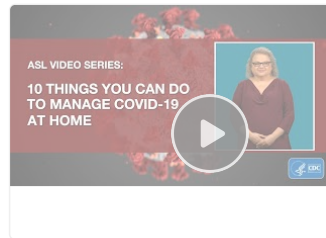
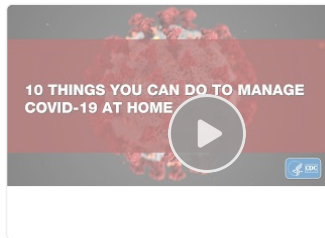
### I wear a mask because...

CDC staff give their reasons for wearing a mask.



[Wear a mask because...](#)

## Handwashing Resources



## More information

[Symptoms](#)

---

[What to do if you are sick](#)

---

[If someone in your house gets sick](#)

---

[Frequently asked questions](#)

---

[Travelers](#)

---

[Individuals, schools, events, businesses and more](#)

---

[Healthcare Professionals](#)

Last Updated Jan. 30, 2021

Content source: National Center for Immunization  
and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD), Division of Viral  
Diseases