



COVID-19

Updated Feb. 25, 2022

As more people are getting vaccinated and resuming activities they did before the pandemic, parents and caregivers are making hard decisions on how to protect their families. Not everyone is able to get vaccinated, so you may be confused about how to keep your family safe, especially if your family has vaccinated and unvaccinated members.

Things to Think About

Here are some things to consider when planning outings with your family.

What is your family's vaccination status?

- **Everyone 5 years and older** should get a COVID-19 vaccination to help protect against COVID-19.
- People who are not **up to date** on their COVID-19 vaccines and children under 5 years old who are not able to get a COVID-19 vaccine should continue taking **steps to prevent getting sick**.
- Everyone ages 2 years and older should properly wear a well-fitting mask indoors in public in areas where the **COVID-19 Community Level** is high, regardless of vaccination status.
- In general, people do not need to wear **masks** when outdoors.
- If you are sick and need to be around others, or are **caring for someone who has COVID-19**, wear a mask.
- If the **COVID-19 Community Level** where you live is
 - Low
 - Wear a mask based on your personal preference, informed by your personal level of risk.
 - Medium
 - If you are at risk for **severe illness**, talk to your healthcare provider about wearing masks indoors in public.
 - If you live with or will gather with someone at risk for severe illness, wear a mask when indoors with them.
 - High
 - If you are 2 or older, wear a well-fitting mask indoors in public, regardless of vaccination status or individual risk (including in K-12 schools and other community settings).
- If you are at risk for severe illness, wear a mask or respirator that provides you with greater protection.



Do you have family members with medical conditions or a weakened immune system?

- People with **certain underlying medical conditions** are at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
- People who have a condition or are taking medications that **weaken their immune system** may not be fully protected even if they are **up to date** with their COVID-19 vaccines. They should talk to their healthcare provider about what

precautions may be needed.

- If you are at increased risk for severe illness, or live with or spend time with someone at higher risk, speak to your healthcare provider about wearing a mask at medium [COVID-19 Community Levels](#).



Where is your family going?

- Outdoor activities and settings are safer than indoor ones.

- Avoid places that are [poorly ventilated](#).

- If someone in your family is younger than 2 years old or cannot wear a mask, limit visits with people who are not vaccinated or whose vaccination status is unknown and keep distance between your child and other people in public.



Regardless of which safer activities your family chooses, remember to [protect yourself and others](#).

What are the number of COVID-19 cases and vaccinated people in your community or the community you are visiting?

- Use [CDC Data Tracker](#) to learn about the situation in your community.
- If your community has a high number of COVID-19 cases or a low number of vaccinated people, consider choosing safer activities.

How to Talk to People Who Care for or Spend Time with Your Family Member

Learn how to talk to professional caregivers, extended family members, family friends, teachers, or other people your loved one spends time with about how to keep your loved one safe from COVID-19.

- Check that your child's school, childcare program, your family member's adult care program, or other caregivers are taking the necessary steps to [protect your loved ones](#) in their care.
 - [Learn more about CDC's latest recommendations for K-12 schools and early care and education programs](#).
- Tell them to encourage your family member to wear a [mask](#) indoors in public during times when the [COVID-19 Community Level](#) is high.
 - Caregivers can help model mask-wearing for children who are too young to get vaccinated.
- Let caregivers know, as appropriate, if your loved one or someone they live with has an underlying medical condition or a weakened immune system.
- Pack an extra mask in your child's backpack. If your child is old enough, ask if your child can bring hand sanitizer from home to use when they cannot wash their hands with soap and water.



Helping Your Family Member Cope

As families participate in more activities, children or other family members may worry about themselves, their family, and friends getting sick with COVID-19. They may feel anxious about going to school, childcare, or normal activities like grocery shopping or [gatherings](#). Parents, family members, and other trusted adults can help your loved one make sense of what they hear.

- Make yourself available to listen and to talk. Let your family member know they can come to you when they have questions.
- Reassure your child or family member that they are safe.
- Let them know it is okay if they feel upset. Share with them how you deal with your own stress so that they can learn [how to cope](#) from you.
- Answer questions honestly and share facts about COVID-19 in a way that your family member can understand.
- [Teach children and other family members everyday actions](#) to reduce the spread of germs.
 - Parents and caregivers can help by modeling these behaviors themselves.
- Discuss with your family member any [actions or routines that may be taken at school, childcare](#), adult care, or other activities to help protect them and others.
- Take steps to protect you and your family's mental health.
 - Try to keep up with regular routines.
 - Find safe ways to keep your family connected with friends and other family members.
 - [Teach your family healthy coping skills](#) by modeling them yourself. Take breaks, get plenty of sleep, exercise, and eat well.

Related Pages

› [COVID-19 Vaccines for Children and Teens](#)

› [Know What to Expect at Your Child's K- 12 School or Child Care Program](#)

› [Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools](#)

› [COVID-19 Guidance for Operating Early Care and Education/Child Care Programs](#)

› [Pregnant and Recently Pregnant People](#)

› [Breastfeeding and Caring for Newborns](#)

› [Caring for People with Developmental and Behavioral Disorders](#)

› [Helping Children Cope](#)

› [Coping with Stress](#)

› [COVID-19 Parental Resources Kit](#)

› [Support For Teens and Young Adults](#)