

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

MENU >



Travel: Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

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The COVID-19 pandemic is a rapidly evolving situation and CDC guidance is updated frequently.

General

If I travel, what steps should I take to help reduce my chance of getting sick or getting someone else sick?

Travel increases your chance of getting and spreading COVID-19. You should not travel if you are sick or have been around someone with COVID-19 in the past 14 days. If you travel:

- Avoid close contact by [staying at least 6 feet](#) (about 2 arms' length) from anyone who is not from your household.
- Wear a [mask](#) to keep your nose and mouth covered when in public settings.
- [Wash your hands](#) often or use hand sanitizer.
- Avoid contact with anyone who is sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Do not travel with someone who is sick.
- The safest food options: drive-thru, delivery, take-out, and curbside pick-up.
- Make sure you are up to date with your routine vaccinations, including measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine and the seasonal flu vaccine.
- Follow [state and local recommendations](#) or requirements after you return from travel.

Should I wear a mask?

CDC recommends that everyone wear a [mask](#) over their nose and mouth when in public, including during travel. Masks slow the spread of COVID-19 because they help keep people who are infected from spreading respiratory droplets to others when they cough, sneeze, or talk. Medical masks and N-95 respirators are for healthcare workers and other first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance.

Some people shouldn't wear masks:

- Children younger than 2 years old
- Anyone who has trouble breathing
- Anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without help

What if I recently traveled and get sick?

See CDC's website [What to Do If You Are Sick](#).

How can I protect myself from COVID-19 when using different types of transportation?

See CDC's website [Protect Yourself When Using Transportation](#).

Domestic Travel

Can traveling to visit family or friends increase my chances of getting and spreading COVID-19?

Yes. Travel increases your chances of getting and spreading COVID-19. Before you travel, learn if COVID-19 is spreading in your local area or in any of the places you are going. Traveling to visit family may be especially dangerous if you or your loved ones are [more likely to get very ill from COVID-19](#). People at higher risk for severe illness need to take [extra precautions](#). For more considerations see the webpage [Coronavirus in the United States—Considerations for Travelers](#).

Does traveling to campgrounds or going camping pose any risks?

Yes. Going camping at a time when much of the United States is experiencing community spread of COVID-19 can pose a risk to you if you come in close contact with others or share public facilities (like restrooms or picnic areas) at campsites or along the trails. Exposure may be especially unsafe if you are [more likely to get very ill from COVID-19](#) and are planning to be in remote areas, without easy access to medical care. Also be aware that many local, state, and national public parks have been temporarily closed due to COVID-19. [Follow these actions](#) when visiting a park.

International Travel

Should I avoid traveling internationally?

Travel increases your chance of getting and spreading COVID-19. COVID-19 risk in most countries is high, and travelers should avoid nonessential travel to high-risk destinations. Travelers at [increased risk for severe illness](#) should consider postponing all travel, including essential travel, to high-risk destinations. To check a destination's COVID-19 risk level see [COVID-19 Travel Recommendations by Destination](#).

Some healthcare systems are overwhelmed and there may be limited access to adequate medical care in affected areas. Many countries are implementing travel restrictions and mandatory quarantines, closing borders, and prohibiting non-citizens from entry with little advance notice. If you choose to travel internationally, your travel plans may be disrupted. If you get sick or are exposed to a person with COVID-19 during your trip, you may be isolated or quarantined and your return to the United States may be delayed.

CDC also recommends all travelers [defer all cruise ship travel worldwide](#).

What can I expect when departing other countries?

Some countries are conducting exit screening for all passengers leaving their destination. Before being permitted to board a departing flight, you may have your temperature taken and be asked questions about your travel history and health.

What should I do after I arrive in the United States?

After travel, all travelers should take these actions to protect others from getting sick:

- [Stay at least 6 feet](#) (about 2 arms' length) from anyone who is not from your household. It's important to do this everywhere — both indoors and outdoors.
- Wear a [mask](#) to keep your nose and mouth when you are outside of your home.
- [Wash your hands](#) often or use hand sanitizer.
- Watch your health: Look for [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, and take your temperature if you feel sick.
- See CDC's [After Travel](#) webpage to learn if you should take additional precautions.

Follow [state](#), [territorial](#), [tribal](#), and local recommendations or requirements.

When can I return to work after international travel?

Most travelers can go back to work but should take precautions. Some travelers may have higher risk of exposure and should stay home for 14 days. See CDC's [After Travel](#) webpage to learn what precautions you should take.

How does CDC determine the COVID-19 risk level of a destination?

CDC uses Travel Health Notices (THNs) to help travelers understand COVID-19 risk in each destination. To learn more about how a destination's COVID-19 THN Level is determined, visit [How CDC Determines the Level of a Destination's COVID-19 Travel Health Notice](#).

To learn more about COVID-19 travel recommendation for a specific country, visit [COVID-19 Travel Recommendations by Destination](#).

How often are international travel recommendations (destination risk levels) updated? —

Daily, CDC monitors every destination's COVID-19 data to assess COVID-19 risk. A destination can move from a Level 3 (High Risk) to a lower Travel Health Notice (THN) level or no THN when the appropriate criteria are met. To learn more about how a destination's COVID-19 risk is determined, visit [How CDC Determines the Level of a Destination's COVID-19 Travel Health Notice](#)

What restrictions might be in place in other countries that affect US travelers? —

For details about another country's travel restrictions or entry requirements, such as mandatory testing or quarantine, check with the country's Office of Foreign Affairs or Ministry of Health or the [US Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs, Country Information page](#) [↗](#).

Air or Cruise Travel

Can flying on an airplane increase my risk of getting COVID-19? —

Yes. Air travel requires spending time in security lines and airport terminals, which can bring you in close contact with other people and frequently touched surfaces. Most viruses and other germs do not spread easily on flights because of how air circulates and is filtered on airplanes. However, social distancing is difficult on crowded flights, and you may have to sit near others (within 6 feet), sometimes for hours. This may increase your risk for exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19.

What happens if there is a sick passenger on an international or domestic flight? —

Under current federal regulations, pilots must report all illnesses and deaths to CDC before arriving to a U.S. destination. According to CDC disease protocols, if a sick traveler is considered a risk to the public's health, CDC works with local and state health departments and international public health agencies to contact exposed passengers and crew.

Be sure to give the airline your current contact information when booking your ticket so you can be notified if you are exposed to a sick traveler on a flight.

For more information, see the CDC webpage [Protecting Travelers' Health from Airport to Community: Investigating Contagious Diseases on Flights](#).

Should I delay going on a cruise? —

Yes. CDC recommends that all travelers [defer all cruise ship travel worldwide](#). Recent reports of COVID-19 on cruise ships highlight the risk of infection to cruise ship passengers and crew. Like many other viruses, COVID-19 appears to spread more easily between people in close quarters aboard ships.

For information about traveling in the United States: [Coronavirus and Travel in the United States](#)

