

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)



Celebrating Thanksgiving

Updated Nov. 19, 2020 [Print](#)



More than 1 million COVID-19 cases were reported in the United States over the last 7 days.

As cases continue to increase rapidly across the United States, the safest way to celebrate Thanksgiving is to celebrate at home with the people you live with.

Gatherings with family and friends [who do not live with you](#) can increase the chances of getting or spreading [COVID-19](#) or the [flu](#).

Travel

Travel may increase your chance of getting and spreading COVID-19. Postponing travel and staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others this year.

If you are considering traveling for Thanksgiving, here are some important questions to ask yourself and your loved ones beforehand. These questions can help you decide what is best for you and your family.

- Are you, someone in your household, or someone you will be visiting at [increased risk for getting very sick](#) from COVID-19?
- Are cases high or increasing in your community or your destination? Check [CDC's COVID Data Tracker](#) for the latest number of cases.
- Are hospitals in your community or your destination overwhelmed with patients who have COVID-19? To find out, check [state and local public health department websites](#).
- Does your home or destination have requirements or restrictions for travelers? Check [state and local requirements](#) before you travel.
- During the 14 days before your travel, have you or those you are visiting had close contact with people they don't live with?
- Do your plans include traveling by bus, train, or air which might make staying 6 feet apart difficult?
- Are you traveling with people who don't live with you?

If the answer to any of these questions is "yes," you should consider making other plans, such as hosting a virtual gathering or delaying your travel.

It's important to talk with the people you live with and your family and friends about the risks of traveling for Thanksgiving.

If you do travel

- Check [travel restrictions](#) before you go.
- Get your [flu shot](#) before you travel.
- Always wear a mask in public settings, when using [public transportation](#), and when around people who you don't live with.
- [Stay at least 6 feet apart](#) from anyone who does not live with you.



Wash your hands often or use hand sanitizer.

- Avoid touching your mask, eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Bring extra supplies, such as masks and hand sanitizer.
- Know [when to delay your travel](#).

Everyone Can Make Thanksgiving Safer

Wear a mask

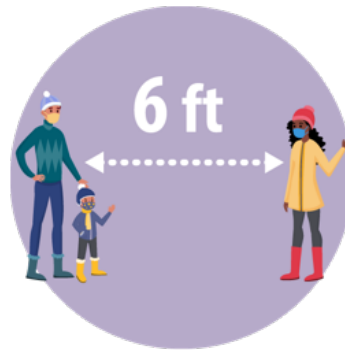


Wear a mask with two or more layers to help [protect yourself and others](#) from COVID-19.

- Wear the mask over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin.
- Make sure the mask fits snugly against the sides of your face.

Stay at least 6 feet away from others who do not live with you

- Remember that people without symptoms may be able to spread COVID-19 or flu.
- Keeping 6 feet (about 2 arm lengths) from others is especially important for [people who are at higher risk of getting very sick](#).



Wash your hands

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Keep [hand sanitizer](#) with you and use it when you are unable to wash your hands.
- Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.



Attending a Gathering

Celebrating virtually or with the people you live with is the safest choice this Thanksgiving.

If you choose to attend a gathering, make your celebration safer. In addition to following the steps that everyone can take to make Thanksgiving safer, take these additional steps if attending a Thanksgiving gathering:



- Bring your own food, drinks, plates, cups, and utensils.
- Wear a mask and safely [store your mask](#) while eating and drinking.
- Avoid going in and out of the areas where food is being prepared or handled, such as in the kitchen.
- Use single-use options, like salad dressing and condiment packets, and disposable items like food containers, plates, and utensils.

Hosting a Thanksgiving Gathering



Celebrating virtually or with the people you live with is the safest choice this Thanksgiving.

If having guests to your home, be sure that people follow the steps that everyone can take to make Thanksgiving safer. These steps include:

- Have a small [outdoor meal](#) with family and friends who live in your community.
- Limit the number of guests.
- Have conversations with guests ahead of time to set expectations for celebrating together.
- [Clean and disinfect](#) frequently touched surfaces and items between use.
- If celebrating indoors, bring in fresh air by opening windows and doors, if possible. You can use a window fan in one of the open windows to blow air out of the window. This will pull fresh air in through the other open windows.
- Limit the number of people in food preparation areas.
- Have guests bring their own food and drink.
- If sharing food, have one person serve food and use single-use options, like plastic utensils.

Consider Other Thanksgiving Activities

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Host a virtual Thanksgiving meal with friends and family who don't live with you

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Schedule a time to share a meal together virtually.

- Have people share recipes and show their turkey, dressing, or other dishes they prepared.

Watch television and play games with people in your household

- Watch Thanksgiving Day parades, sports, and movies at home.
- Find a fun game to play.

Shopping

- Shop online sales the day after Thanksgiving and days leading up to the winter holidays.
- Use contactless services for purchased items, like curbside pick-up.
- Shop in open air markets staying 6 feet away from others and wear a mask.

Other Activities

- Safely prepare traditional dishes and deliver them to family and neighbors in a way that does not involve contact with others (for example, leave them on the porch).
- Participate in a gratitude activity, like writing down things you are grateful for and sharing with your friends and family.



More Information

[Everyone Can Make Thanksgiving Safer](#)  [2 MB, 2 pages]

[Consider Other Thanksgiving Activities](#)  [1 MB, 1 page]

Last Updated Nov. 19, 2020

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