

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)



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

Do I need to get tested before I travel? 

CDC recommends travelers get tested 1-3 days before traveling by plane internationally. See CDC's [Testing and International Air Travel](#) for more information. Also, [get tested](#) 3-5 days after international air travel **AND** stay home for 7 days after travel. Even if you test negative, stay home for the full 7 days. If your test is positive, [isolate](#) yourself to protect others from getting infected. If you don't get tested, it's safest to stay home for 14 days after travel.

Testing does not eliminate all risk, but when combined with a period of staying at home and [everyday precautions](#) like [wearing masks](#), [social distancing](#), and [handwashing](#), it can make travel safer by reducing spread on public transportation, in airports, and at destinations.

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

Travel may increase your chance of getting and spreading COVID-19. **Staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.**

Delay travel if you are waiting for test results, test positive, are sick, or if you have been around someone with COVID-19 in the past 14 days. Find out more about [When to Delay Travel](#).

If you travel:

- [Stay at least 6 feet](#)/2 meters (about 2 arm lengths) 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 covered when you are in shared spaces outside of your home, including [when using public transportation](#).
- [Wash your hands](#) often or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid contact with anyone who is sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Choose the safest food options: drive-thru, delivery, take-out, and curbside pick-up.
- If traveling by plane internationally, get tested with a viral test 1-3 days before travel.
- Get tested 3-5 days after international air travel AND stay home for 7 days after travel. If you don't get tested, it's safest to stay home for 14 days.
- 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.


Do not travel if you test positive; immediately [isolate](#) yourself, and follow [public health recommendations](#).

Should I wear a mask? 

CDC recommends that everyone wear a [mask](#) over their nose and mouth when in public, including [on public transportation and in transportation hubs such as airports and stations](#). 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 [Travel During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#).

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.

Am I required to quarantine for 14 days after domestic travel?

CDC does not require that domestic travelers undergo a mandatory federal quarantine but does recommend you take everyday actions and reduce nonessential activities for 14 days after you return from travel to protect others from getting COVID-19:


- [Stay at least 6 feet/2 meters](#) (about 2 arm lengths) from anyone who did not travel with you, particularly in crowded areas. It's important to do this everywhere — both indoors and outdoors.
- [Wear a mask](#) to keep your nose and mouth covered when you are in shared spaces outside of your home, including when using [public transportation](#).
- If there are people in the household who did not travel with you, [wear a mask](#) and ask everyone in the household to wear masks in shared spaces inside your home for 14 days after travel.
- [Wash your hands](#) often or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid being around people who are at [increased risk for severe illness](#).
- Watch your health: Look for [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, and take your temperature if you feel sick.

Always follow [state and local](#) recommendations or requirements related to travel.

International Travel

Should I avoid traveling internationally?

Travel may increase your chance of getting and spreading COVID-19. Staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others from COVID-19. To check travel recommendations for a certain destination, see [COVID-19 Travel Recommendations by Destination](#).

Follow entry requirements or restrictions at your destination which might include testing, quarantine, and providing contact information. Check with your destination's Office of Foreign Affairs or Ministry of Health or the [US Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs, Country Information page](#)  for details about entry requirements and restrictions for arriving travelers. If you test positive on arrival, you might be required to isolate. You might be prevented from returning to the United States as scheduled.

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

What can I expect when departing other countries?

Get tested with a [viral test](#) 1–3 days before your flight. 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?

If you traveled by air-

- [Get tested](#) 3-5 days after travel **AND** stay home for 7 days after travel.
 - Even if you test negative, stay home for the full 7 days.
 - If your test is positive, [isolate](#) yourself to protect others from getting infected.
- If you don't get tested, it's safest to stay home for 14 days after travel.
- Avoid being around people who are at [increased risk for severe illness](#) for 14 days, whether you get tested or not.
- Always follow [state and local](#) recommendations or requirements related to travel.

Regardless of where you traveled or what you did during your trip, take these everyday actions to protect others from getting COVID-19:

- [Stay at least 6 feet/2 meters](#) (about 2 arm lengths) from anyone who did not travel with you, particularly in crowded areas. It's important to do this everywhere — both indoors and outdoors.
- [Wear a mask](#) to keep your nose and mouth covered when you are in shared spaces outside of your home, including when using [public transportation](#).
- If there are people in the household who did not travel with you, [wear a mask](#) and ask everyone in the household to wear masks in shared spaces inside your home for 14 days after travel.
- [Wash your hands](#) often or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid being around people who are at [increased risk for severe illness](#).
- Watch your health: Look for [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, and take your temperature if you feel sick.

When can I return to work after international travel?

See CDC's [After You Travel](#) webpage to learn what precautions you should take.

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


CDC reviews data reported to the World Health Organization daily to determine a destination's COVID-19 Travel Health Notice level. There are a few factors that CDC considers when determining the level of a destination. To find out more about the COVID-19 Travel Health Notice levels, visit [How CDC Determines the Level for COVID-19 Travel Health Notices](#).

These notices offer travel recommendations based on the level of COVID-19 in a destination. To learn more about COVID-19 travel recommendations for a specific destination, visit [COVID-19 Travel Recommendations by Destination](#).

How often are international travel recommendations related to COVID-19 updated?

Recommendations are updated weekly. CDC reviews data reported to the World Health Organization daily to determine a destination's COVID-19 Travel Health Notice level and makes appropriate level changes once a week. To find out more about the COVID-19 Travel Health Notice levels, visit [How CDC Determines the Level for COVID-19 Travel Health Notices](#).

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

Check with your destination's Office of Foreign Affairs or Ministry of Health or the [US Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs, Country Information page](#)  for details about entry requirements and restrictions for arriving travelers.

Does CDC require quarantine for 14 days after international travel?

CDC does not require international travelers undergo mandatory federal quarantine, but does recommend travelers do the following after an international flight-

- [Get tested](#) 3-5 days after travel **AND** stay home for 7 days after travel.
 - Even if you test negative, stay home for the full 7 days.
 - If your test is positive, [isolate](#) yourself to protect others from getting infected.
- If you don't get tested, it's safest to stay home for 14 days after travel.
- Avoid being around people who are at [increased risk for severe illness](#) for 14 days, whether you get tested or not.
- Always follow [state and local](#) recommendations or requirements related to travel.

Does CDC require that travelers get a test before entering the United States?


CDC does not require international travelers to get a test before traveling to the United States, but does recommend people traveling to the United States by air [get tested](#) with a [viral test](#) 1-3 days before a flight. For more information see CDC's [Testing and International Air Travel](#) page. Always follow [state and local](#) recommendations or requirements related to travel.

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.


[CDC strongly recommends everyone wear a mask on public transportation](#) and at transportation hubs, including on airplanes and in airports.

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 [avoid all cruise ship travel worldwide](#), including river boats. 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: [Travel During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

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