

Safe outdoor activities during the COVID-19 pandemic



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The COVID-19 pandemic doesn't have to halt all of your outdoor fun. Here are several fun outdoor activities you can still enjoy.

By [Mayo Clinic Staff](#)

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has affected activities for many people. Public health restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic have led to canceled festivals, concerts and other events. Many vacations and large celebrations have been limited or put on hold.

Despite the changes caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, there's still plenty of fun to be had. In fact, seeking out fun activities may be even more important now. Doing something you enjoy can distract you from problems and help you cope with life's challenges.

Depending on the weather where you live, various activities may be available.

Why choose outdoor activities?

The COVID-19 virus is primarily spread from person to person among those in close contact, within about 6 feet (2 meters). The virus spreads through respiratory droplets released into the air when talking, coughing, speaking, breathing or sneezing. In some situations, especially in enclosed spaces with poor ventilation, the COVID-19 virus can spread when a person is exposed to small droplets or aerosols that stay in the air for minutes to hours.

When you're outside, fresh air is constantly moving, dispersing these droplets. So you're less likely to breathe in enough of the respiratory droplets containing the virus that causes COVID-19 to become infected if you haven't had a COVID-19 vaccine.

Also, if you are vaccinated, you can return to many indoor and outdoor activities you may not have been able to do because of the pandemic. However, if you are in an area with a high number of people with COVID-19 in the hospital and new COVID-19 cases, the CDC recommends wearing a well-fitted mask indoors in public.

Related information

[What to know about youth summer camps during COVID-19](#)

[New CDC guidance for fully vaccinated adults. What does it mean?](#)

You're considered fully vaccinated 2 weeks after you get a second dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine or 2 weeks after you get a single dose of the Janssen/Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine. You are considered up to date with your vaccines if you have gotten all recommended COVID-19 vaccines, including booster doses, when you become eligible.

For unvaccinated people, outdoor activities that are near where you live and allow plenty of space between you and others pose a lower risk of spread of the COVID-19 virus than indoor activities do.

Being outside offers other benefits, too. It offers an emotional boost and can help you feel less tense, stressed, angry or depressed. And sunlight can give your body vitamin D, too.

Low-risk ways to move more

If you're unvaccinated, coming into close contact with people who don't live with you increases your risk of being exposed to someone infected with the virus that causes COVID-19. That's why, in general, any activity that allows you to keep a social distance of at least 6 feet (2 meters) from others is lower risk if you haven't had a COVID-19 vaccine.

There are many activities you can enjoy close to home, whether you're visiting your favorite public, state or national park, or just spending time in your neighborhood. While various activities may not be possible during some seasons, there are many ways to be active outdoors throughout the year. Get moving with these low-risk outdoor activities during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Walking, running and hiking
- Rollerblading and biking
- Fishing and hunting
- Golfing
- Rock or ice climbing
- Kayaking, canoeing, diving, boating or sailing
- Skiing, including cross-country and downhill skiing
- Ice skating
- Snowboarding
- Sledding
- Snowshoeing
- Fitness classes, held outside or virtually, that allow distance

If you're unvaccinated, avoid crowded sidewalks and narrow paths and choose routes that make it easy to keep your distance. Wear a well-fitted mask indoors in public if you live in an area with a high number of people with COVID-19 in the hospital and new COVID-19 cases. Don't wear a mask during activities in which it might get wet, such as swimming.

And don't let cold weather stop you from being active outdoors! Dress in layers and protect your head, hands and feet. Then head outside for a winter hike or go cross-country skiing. And aim to keep a positive mindset about winter. This may help you to enjoy the season and winter activities more.

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Low-risk social activities

Depending on your location and the weather, many other outdoor activities can be good low-risk choices if you're not vaccinated:

- **Picnics.** Pack food from home. Or pick up takeout from your favorite restaurant or food truck. In some places, you might be able to get your food delivered to you. Take it to enjoy at your favorite public park, or eat out on your patio or deck.
- **Outdoor farmers markets.** Wear a mask when in crowded areas and maintain a social distance of at least 6 feet (2 meters) from others.
- **Drive-in movies.** The COVID-19 pandemic has launched a drive-in movie theater comeback in the U.S. It's something many people can enjoy together with plenty of physical distance.

Low- to moderate-risk outdoor activities

Depending on how they're done, many popular outdoor activities also can be done safely for those who are unvaccinated. If you're fully vaccinated, you can return to many indoor and outdoor activities you may not have been able to do because of the pandemic.

While some of these activities may not be available in all seasons and locations, take advantage of them when the weather permits. Some ideas include:

- **Restaurant patio dining.** When the weather is appropriate to be outside, patio dining can be a good outdoor option. Outdoor patio dining at uncrowded restaurants where patio tables are spaced appropriately is safer than indoor dining if you haven't been vaccinated. Keep a distance of at least 6 feet from others in other areas of the restaurant if you're unvaccinated. Avoid self-service food and drink options. And remember to wash your hands when you enter and leave.
- **Camping.** If you're unvaccinated and you only have close contact with people you live with, camping is low risk. If you camp with people who don't live in your household and you're unvaccinated, camp in separate tents spaced at least 6 feet (2 meters) apart and avoid sharing camping supplies, including food and drinks. Pack hand soap, hand sanitizer and supplies to clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces.

- **Swimming pools and beaches.** Close contact of less than than 6 feet (2 meters) from others — not water itself — can make these activities risky if you're unvaccinated. If you go to the beach and come into close contact with others, your risk is higher if you haven't been vaccinated. Water itself doesn't spread the [COVID-19](#) virus to people.
- **Gathering with small groups of friends.** For people who haven't been vaccinated, allow for social distancing between people from different households and skip the hugs and handshakes when meeting outdoors in small groups. Plan activities that don't require close contact, such as sidewalk chalk for kids and games like kickball. And remember to bring hand sanitizer.

Remember that just getting together for a chat at a safe distance can offer a valuable opportunity to be with people you care about — and boost your mood at the same time.

- **Boating with friends.** If you're unvaccinated, canoeing, kayaking or rowing with people who don't live in your household is riskier than doing these activities with only those from your own household.
- **Barbecues, campfires and outdoor potlucks.** Grill out on the patio. Or if the weather is cool, bundle up in warm clothes and sit around a fire pit. If you and your friends haven't been vaccinated, keep your gathering small, maintaining social distance from others. Plan activities that don't require close contact. You may even choose to have everyone bring their own food and drinks. Wash your hands when you arrive and leave the gathering.
- **Sports and sporting events.** Contact sports, such as wrestling and basketball, carry more [COVID-19](#) risk than others for people who haven't been vaccinated. Team sports such as tennis, baseball, softball and soccer pose less risk because players can maintain physical distance. It's important for spectators, players and coaches to keep social distance. Wear a mask when at crowded events, use hand sanitizer and ensure you have enough social distance — at least 6 feet (2 meters) — between you and other spectators, whether you're standing, sitting in chairs or sharing bleachers.

High-risk outdoor activities

Bringing many people together in close contact for a longer period of time poses the highest risk of [COVID-19](#) spread if you are unvaccinated.

Examples include:

- **Large gatherings.** Being in large gatherings or crowds of people where it's difficult to stay spaced at least 6 feet (2 meters) apart poses the highest risk for people who haven't been vaccinated. The larger the group and the longer people are together in these situations, the higher the risk. Weddings, festivals and parades are examples.
- **Youth camp activities.** Camps can be generally high-risk because campers come from different locations and spend a lot of time together indoors, in close contact. But camps can follow precautions to make them safer.

Camps can pose less risk if campers are from the same area, don't share objects, wear masks, get vaccinated when possible, wash hands regularly, and spend time outdoors with at least 6 feet (2 meters) between them. Campers should also stay home if they are sick, have COVID-19 symptoms or have recently had contact with someone with COVID-19.

- **Playgrounds.** The many frequently touched surfaces of playground equipment make it easier to spread the virus that causes COVID-19 for children who haven't been vaccinated. However, in many areas, parks and playgrounds are open. Unvaccinated children who use playground equipment should maintain distance from others, avoid touching their faces and wash their hands afterward to help prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

Think safety and enjoyment

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, it's important to take care of yourself and those around you. Practice precautions such as washing your hands often, not touching your face, avoiding close contact with people who are sick, and wearing a well-fitted mask when you're in indoor public places if you are in an area with a high number of people with COVID-19 in the hospital and new COVID-19 cases. These steps are especially important for those with a higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19.

At the same time, well-being also includes doing things that make life worth living. With the right information, you can make thoughtful choices about ways to bring a sense of normalcy and joy to your life during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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COVID-19

To maximize protection from the [Delta variant](#) and prevent possibly spreading it to others, get vaccinated as soon as you can and wear a mask indoors in public if you are in [an area of substantial or high transmission](#).

Considerations for Restaurant and Bar Operators

Updated June 14, 2021

[Print](#)

For the latest information, view the updated business guidance from OSHA: [Protecting Workers: Guidance on Mitigating and Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 in the Workplace](#) [↗](#)

As restaurants and bars resume and continue operations in some areas of the United States, CDC offers the following considerations for ways in which operators can reduce risk for employees, customers, and communities and slow the spread of COVID-19. Restaurants and bars can determine, in collaboration with [state, local, territorial, or tribal health officials](#), whether and how to implement these considerations, making adjustments to meet the needs and circumstances of the local community. Implementation should be guided by what is feasible, acceptable, and tailored to the needs of each community. These considerations are meant to supplement—**not replace**—any state, local, territorial, or tribal health and safety laws, rules, and regulations with which businesses must comply.

Guidance for customers on reducing the risk of spreading COVID-19 when dining at a restaurant can be found [here](#).

Guiding Principles to Keep in Mind

The more an individual interacts with others, and the longer that interaction, the higher the [risk of COVID-19 spread](#). Masks may reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread when they are consistently used by customers and employees, especially when social distancing measures are difficult to maintain. The risk of COVID-19 spread increases in a restaurant or bar setting as interactions within 6 feet of others increase, as described below. Masks may reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread when worn in any of these risk scenarios.

- **Lowest Risk:** Food service limited to drive-through, delivery, take-out, and curbside pick up.
- **More Risk:** Drive-through, delivery, take-out, and curbside pick up emphasized. On-site dining limited to outdoor seating. Seating capacity reduced to allow tables to be spaced at least 6 feet apart.
- **Higher Risk:** On-site dining with indoor seating capacity reduced to allow tables to be spaced at least 6 feet apart. And/or on-site dining with outdoor seating, but tables **not** spaced at least six feet apart.
- **Highest Risk:** On-site dining with indoor seating. Seating capacity **not** reduced and tables **not** spaced at least 6 feet apart.

COVID-19 is mostly spread when people are physically near (within 6 feet) a person with COVID-19 or have direct contact with that person. When people with COVID-19 cough, sneeze, sing, talk, or breathe, they produce **respiratory droplets**. Infections occur mainly through exposure to respiratory droplets when a person is in close contact with someone who has COVID-19.

There is evidence that under certain conditions, people with COVID-19 seem to have infected others who were more than 6 feet away. This is called airborne transmission. These transmissions occurred within enclosed spaces that had inadequate ventilation. Available data indicate that it is much more common for the virus that causes COVID-19 to spread through close contact with a person who has COVID-19 than through airborne transmission.

Respiratory droplets can also land on surfaces and objects. It is possible that a person could get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes. Spread from touching surfaces is not thought to be a common way that COVID-19 spreads.

Fortunately, there are a number of actions operators of restaurants and bars can take to help lower the risk of COVID-19 exposure and spread. Personal prevention practices (such as [handwashing](#), [staying home when sick](#), and [wearing masks](#)) and workplace prevention practices, like environmental [cleaning and disinfection](#), are important principles of preventing the spread of COVID-19.

Promoting Behaviors that Reduce Spread

Restaurants and bars may implement several strategies that reduce the spread of COVID-19 among employees and customers.

- **Staying Home when Appropriate**

- Educate employees about when they should [stay home](#) and when they can return to work.
 - Actively encourage employees who are sick or have recently had a [close contact](#) with a person with COVID-19 to stay home. Develop policies that encourage sick employees to stay at home (for example, sick leave) without fear of reprisal, and ensure employees are aware of these policies. See the Maintaining Healthy Operations section below for suggestions.
 - [Employees should stay home](#) if they have tested positive for or are showing COVID-19 [symptoms](#).
 - Employees who have recently had a [close contact](#) with a person with COVID-19 should also [stay home and monitor their health](#).
 - CDC's criteria can help inform when employees may return to work:
 - [If they have been sick with COVID-19](#)
 - [If they have recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19](#)

- **Masks**

CDC recommends [masks to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread](#). Masks are currently recommended for employees and for customers as much as possible when not eating or drinking and when social distancing measures are difficult to maintain. [These masks](#) (sometimes called cloth masks) are meant to protect other people in case the wearer is infected. They are not appropriate substitutes for masks used by workers for personal protective equipment (PPE) such as surgical masks or respirators. (More information on masks used for PPE can be found [here](#).)

- Consider requiring the use of [masks](#) among all staff. Masks are **most** essential in times when physical distancing is difficult. Information should be provided to staff on [proper use, removal, and washing of masks](#).
 - Note: Masks should not be placed on:
 - Babies and children younger than 2 years old
 - Anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious
 - Anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance
 - Employees should avoid touching their masks once they are on their faces. Employees should wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after touching masks on their faces.

- **Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette**

- Require frequent employee [handwashing](#) (e.g. before, during, and after preparing food; after touching garbage) with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and increase monitoring to ensure adherence.
- Ensure gloves are worn by employees when they are completing these activities:
 - Removing garbage bags or handling and disposing of trash
 - Handling used or dirty food service items
 - [Cleaning and disinfecting](#) surfaces; read and follow the directions on the label to ensure safe and effective use of disinfectant.
- Employees should always wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after removing gloves.
- Encourage employees to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue (or use the inside of their elbow). Used tissues should be thrown in the trash and hands washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If soap and water are not readily available for handwashing, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

employees should avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth with gloved or unwashed hands.

- **Adequate Supplies**

- Ensure adequate supplies to support [healthy hygiene](#). Supplies include soap, hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol (placed on every table, if supplies allow), paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes, [masks](#) (as feasible), and no-touch/foot pedal trash cans.

- **Signs and Messages**

- Post [signs](#) in highly visible locations (e.g., at entrances, in restrooms) that [promote everyday protective measures](#) for both employees and customers and describe how to [stop the spread](#) of germs such as by [properly wearing a mask](#) and [properly washing hands](#).
- Include messages (for example, [videos](#)) about behaviors that prevent spread of COVID-19 when communicating with vendors, staff, and customers (such as on business websites, in emails, and on [social media accounts](#)).
- Communicate the prevention steps the restaurant or bar is taking and any changes in protocols on business websites, in emails, and on social media accounts.
- Find free CDC print and digital resources at the [bars and restaurant page](#), as well as on CDC's [communications resources main page](#).

Maintaining Healthy Environments

Restaurants and bars may implement several strategies to maintain healthy environments.

When to Clean

Cleaning with products containing soap or detergent reduces germs on surfaces and objects by removing contaminants and may weaken or damage some of the virus particles, which decreases risk of infection from surfaces.

[Cleaning high touch surfaces and shared objects once a day is usually enough](#) to sufficiently remove virus that may be on surfaces unless someone with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 has been in your facility. Disinfecting (using disinfectants on [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)'s List N](#)) removes any remaining germs on surfaces, which further reduces any risk of spreading infection. For more information on cleaning your facility regularly and cleaning your facility when someone is sick, see [Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#)

When to Disinfect

You may want to either clean more frequently or choose to disinfect (in addition to cleaning) in shared spaces if certain conditions apply that can increase the risk of infection from touching surfaces.

- High transmission of COVID-19 in your community
- Low number of people wearing masks
- Infrequent hand hygiene
- The space is occupied by people at [increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19](#)

[If there has been a sick person or someone who tested positive for COVID-19](#) in your facility within the last 24 hours, you should clean AND disinfect the space.

Use Disinfectants Safely

Always read and [follow the directions](#) on how to use and store cleaning and disinfecting products. [Ventilate](#) the space when using these products.

Always follow standard practices and appropriate regulations specific to your facility for minimum standards for cleaning and disinfection. For more information on cleaning and disinfecting, see [Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#).

- **Ventilation**

As noted above, available data indicate that it is much more common for the virus that causes COVID-19 to spread through close contact with a person who has COVID-19 than through airborne transmission. There is evidence that under certain conditions, people with COVID-19 seem to have infected others who were more than 6 feet away. This is

called airborne transmission. These transmissions occurred in indoor spaces with inadequate ventilation. In general, being outdoors and in spaces with good ventilation reduces the risk of exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19.

- Ensure that [ventilation systems operate properly](#) and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible, for example by opening windows and doors and prioritizing outdoor seating. Do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety or health risk to customers or employees (e.g., risk of falling or triggering asthma symptoms).
- Consider improving the [engineering controls](#) using the building ventilation system. Consult with experienced heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning (HVAC) professionals when considering changes to HVAC systems and equipment. This may include some or all of the following activities:
 - Increase total airflow supply to occupied spaces, whenever feasible.
 - Increase outdoor air ventilation, using caution in highly polluted areas. With a lower occupancy level in the building, this increases the effective dilution ventilation per person.
 - Disable demand-controlled ventilation (DCV) controls that reduce air supply based on occupancy or temperature during occupied hours.
 - Open minimum outdoor air dampers to reduce or eliminate HVAC recirculation, if practical. In mild weather, this will not affect thermal comfort or humidity. However, this may be difficult to do in cold, hot, or humid weather.
 - Improve central air filtration to MERV-13 or to as high as possible without significantly diminishing design airflow.
- Inspect filter housing and racks to ensure appropriate filter fit and check for ways to minimize filter bypass.
- Check filters to ensure they are within service life and appropriately installed.
- Consider running the HVAC system at maximum outside airflow for 2 hours before and after occupied times.

Additional guidance can be found in [Ventilation in Buildings](#) and [ASHRAE Standard 62.1, Ventilation for Acceptable Indoor Air Quality](#) [↗](#).

- **Water Systems**

- To minimize the risk of [Legionnaires' disease](#) and other diseases associated with water, [take steps](#) to ensure that all water systems and features (e.g., sink faucets, decorative fountains, drinking fountains) are safe to use if there has been prolonged facility shutdown.

- **Modified Layouts and Procedures**

- Change restaurant and bar layouts to ensure that all customer parties remain at least 6 feet apart (e.g., removing tables/stools/chairs, marking tables/stools/chairs that are not for use).
- Limit seating capacity to allow for [social distancing](#).
- Offer drive-through, curbside take out, or delivery options as applicable. Prioritize outdoor seating as much as possible.
- Ask customers to wait in their cars or away from the establishment while waiting to pick up food or when waiting to be seated. Inform customers of food pickup and dining protocols on the business's website and on posted signs.
- Discourage crowded waiting areas by using phone app, text technology, or signs to alert patrons when their table is ready. Avoid using "buzzers" or other shared objects.
- Consider options for dine-in customers to order ahead of time to limit the amount of time spent in the establishment.
- Avoid offering any self-serve food or drink options, such as buffets, salad bars, and drink stations. This limits the use of shared serving utensils, handles, buttons, or touchscreens and helps customers to stay seated and at least 6 feet apart from people who do not live in their household.

- **Physical Barriers and Guides**

- Install physical barriers, such as sneeze guards and partitions, particularly in areas where it is difficult for individuals to remain at least 6 feet apart. Barriers can be useful in restaurant kitchens and at cash registers, host stands, or food pickup areas where maintaining physical distance of at least 6 feet is difficult.
- Provide physical guides, such as tape on floors or sidewalks and signage, to ensure that individuals remain at least 6 feet apart. Consider providing these guides where lines form, in the kitchen, and at the bar.

- **Communal Spaces**

- Close shared spaces such as break rooms, if possible; otherwise stagger use, require mask use, and [clean and disinfect](#) between use.

- Consistent with applicable law, develop policies to protect the privacy of persons at [higher risk for severe illness](#) in accordance with applicable privacy and confidentiality laws and regulations.

Maintaining Healthy Operations

Restaurants and bars may consider implementing several strategies to maintain healthy operations.

- **Protections for Employees at Higher Risk for Severe Illness from COVID-19**
 - Offer options for employees at [higher risk for severe illness](#) (including older adults and people of all ages with certain underlying medical conditions) that limits their exposure risk (e.g., modified job responsibilities such as managing inventory rather than working as a cashier, or managing administrative needs through telework).
 - Consistent with applicable law, develop policies to protect the privacy of persons at [higher-risk](#) in accordance with applicable privacy and confidentiality laws and regulations.
- **Regulatory Awareness**
 - Be aware of local or state policies and recommendations related to group gatherings to determine if events can be held.
- **Staggered or Rotated Shifts and Sittings**
 - Rotate or stagger shifts to limit the number of employees in the restaurant or bar at the same time.
 - Stagger and limit dining times to minimize the number of customers in the establishment.
 - When possible, use flexible worksites (e.g., telework) and flexible work hours (e.g., staggered shifts) to help establish policies and practices for social distancing (maintaining distance of approximately 6 feet) between employees and others, especially if social distancing is recommended by state and local health authorities.
- **Gatherings**
 - Avoid group events, gatherings, or meetings where social distancing of at least 6 feet between people who do not live in the same household cannot be maintained. See the Modified Layouts and Procedures section above for suggestions on social distancing.
- **Travel and Transit**
 - Encourage employees to use transportation options that minimize close contact with others (e.g., walking or biking, driving or riding by car—alone or with household members only).
 - For employees who commute to work using public transportation or ride sharing:
 - Ask employees to follow the CDC guidance on how to [protect yourself when using transportation](#) and to [wear masks on public transportation](#).
 - Ask them to [wash their hands](#) as soon as possible after their trip.
 - Consider allowing employees to shift their hours so they can commute during less busy times.
- **Designated COVID-19 Point of Contact**
 - Designate a staff person for each shift to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. All staff members should know who this person is and how to contact them.
- **Communication Systems**
 - Put systems in place for:
 - Consistent with applicable law and privacy policies, having staff self-report to the establishment's point of contact if they have [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, a positive test for COVID-19, or were exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the last 14 days in accordance with [health information sharing regulations for COVID-19](#) [↗](#) (e.g. see "Notify Health Officials and Close Contacts" in the [Preparing for When Someone Gets Sick](#) section [below](#)), and other applicable privacy and confidentiality laws and regulations.
 - Notifying staff, customers, and the public of business closures, and restrictions in place to limit COVID-19 exposure (e.g., limited hours of operation).
- **Leave (Time Off) Policies**
 - Implement flexible sick leave policies and practices that enable employees to stay home when they are sick, have been exposed, or are [caring for someone who is sick](#).
 - Examine and revise policies for leave, telework, and employee compensation.
 - Leave policies should be flexible and not punish people for taking time off and should allow sick employees to

stay home and away from co-workers. Leave policies should also account for employees who need to stay home with their children if there are school or childcare closures, or to care for sick family members.

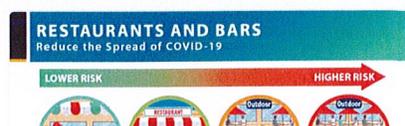
- Develop policies for return-to-work after COVID-19 illness. CDC's [criteria to discontinue home isolation](#) can inform these policies.
- **Back-Up Staffing Plan**
 - Monitor absenteeism of employees, cross-train staff, and create a roster of trained back-up staff.
- **Staff Training**
 - Train all employees in safety actions.
 - Conduct training virtually, or ensure that [social distancing](#) is maintained during training.
- **Recognize Signs and Symptoms**
 - Conduct daily health checks (e.g., temperature screening and/or [symptom checking](#)) of staff safely and respectfully, and in accordance with any applicable privacy laws and regulations.
 - Consider using examples of screening methods in CDC's [General Business FAQs](#) as a guide.
- **Support Coping and Resilience**
 - Promote employees eating healthy, exercising, getting sleep, and finding time to unwind.
 - Encourage employees to talk with people they trust about their concerns and how they are feeling.
 - Consider posting signs for the national distress hotline: call or text 1-800-985-5990.

Preparing for Sick Employees

Restaurants and bars may implement several strategies to prepare for when someone gets sick.

- **Advise Sick Employees of Home Isolation Criteria**
 - Communicate to sick employees that they should not return to work until they have met CDC's [criteria to discontinue home isolation](#).
- **Isolate and Transport Those Who Are Sick**
 - Make sure that employees know they should not come to work if they are sick, and they should notify their manager or other designated COVID-19 point of contact if they become sick with COVID-19 [symptoms](#), test positive for COVID-19, or have been [exposed](#) to someone with COVID-19 or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 symptoms or a confirmed or suspected case.
 - Immediately separate employees or customers with COVID-19 [symptoms](#) (i.e., fever, cough, shortness of breath). Individuals who are sick should go home or to a healthcare facility, depending on how severe their symptoms are, and follow [CDC guidance for caring for oneself and others](#) who are sick.
- **Clean and Disinfect**
 - Close off areas used by a sick person and do not use these areas until after [cleaning and disinfecting](#) them.
 - Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible. Ensure [safe and correct use](#) and storage of [cleaning and disinfection products](#) [🔗](#), including storing them securely away from children.
- **Notify Health Officials and Close Contacts**
 - In accordance with state, territorial, tribal, or local laws, restaurant and bar operators should notify [the health officials](#) in their jurisdiction and staff immediately of any case of COVID-19 among employees, while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with the [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#) [🔗](#).
 - Advise those who have had [close contact](#) with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 to stay home and [self-monitor for symptoms](#), and follow [CDC guidance](#) if symptoms develop. Critical infrastructure workers may refer to [CDC Guidance for Critical Infrastructure Workers](#), if applicable.
 - Consider collaborating with health officials in your jurisdiction to determine whether and how to implement employee [COVID-19 testing strategies](#) and which one(s) would be most appropriate for your circumstances.

Communication Resources





5 Safety Steps for Staff

Restaurants and Bars: follow these 5 safety steps to keep us all healthy

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Daily Checklist for Managers of Restaurants and Bars

Managers can use this helpful checklist

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Assess Your Risk

Use this graphic to assess risk

[Download](#) [image 586 KB]



Letter to Staff Template

Send out a customized letter to your staff to inform them about steps taken to protect them.

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More Information

[Latest COVID-19 information](#)

[COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Cleaning and Disinfection](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions for Businesses](#)

[Guidance for Businesses and Employers](#)

[Persons at higher risk](#)

[COVID-19 Prevention](#)

[Managing Stress and Coping](#)

[Handwashing information](#)

[HIPAA and COVID-19](#)

[Face coverings](#)

[CDC communication resources](#)

[Social Distancing](#)

[Community Mitigation](#)

BREAKING NEWS:

Monoclonal Antibody Therapy Treatments Available Now

Monoclonal Antibody Treatments (MAB) for COVID-19 can prevent severe illness, hospitalization and death among high-risk individuals. This treatment is available widely in Florida.

Individuals 12 years and older who are high-risk, that have contracted or been exposed to COVID-19, are eligible for this treatment. Treatment is free and vaccination status does not matter. Learn more here.

[Find MAB Sites \(https://floridahealthcovid19.gov/monoclonal-antibody-therapy/mab-locator/\)](https://floridahealthcovid19.gov/monoclonal-antibody-therapy/mab-locator/)

[Make An Appointment \(http://www.patientportalfl.com/\)](http://www.patientportalfl.com/)

[Find Other MAB Locations \(https://covid.infusioncenter.org/\)](https://covid.infusioncenter.org/)

How do I prevent and prepare for COVID-19?

Public health is everyone's responsibility. The best way to prevent disease and illness is to practice tried and true public health mitigation measures, including:



Get vaccinated

[Vaccines \(https://floridahealthcovid19.gov/vaccines/\)](https://floridahealthcovid19.gov/vaccines/) are the most effective tools to protect your health and prevent the spread of disease.

Vaccination against COVID-19 and other preventable diseases can protect against the risk of severe illness, hospitalization, and death.

The COVID-19 vaccines used in the U.S. are safe, free, and highly effective, including against known variants.



Wash your hands

Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds to help stop the spread of germs. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol.

When Should I Wash My Hands?

Make good hand hygiene a habit. It's very important to wash your hands:

- Before eating and cooking
- After using the bathroom
- After cleaning around the house
- After touching pets and other animals
- Before and after visiting or taking care of sick people
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After being outside
- After handling mail or packages



Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth

Studies have found that, on average, people can touch their face anywhere from 15-23 times an hour

(Kwok, Gralton, & McLaws, 2015) (Nicas & Best, 2008).

Throughout any given day, hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer viruses to your eyes, nose, or mouth.



Cover coughs and sneezes

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw used tissues into the trash. If tissues are unavailable, you can use your sleeve or the inside of your elbow.

This is important because COVID-19 spreads when an infected person breathes out droplets and very small particles that contain the virus. These droplets and particles can be breathed in by other people or land on their eyes, noses, or mouth.

By following good respiratory hygiene, you can protect people around you from viruses that cause diseases such as COVID-19, influenza (flu), and the common cold.



Clean and disinfect “high-touch” surfaces

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces often, including, but not limited to, tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, and phones.

Cleaning with a household cleaner that contains soap or detergent reduces the amount of germs on surfaces and decreases risk of infection from surfaces. In most situations, cleaning alone removes most virus particles on surfaces.

Disinfection to reduce transmission of COVID-19 at home is likely not needed unless someone in your home is sick or if someone who is positive for COVID-19 has been in your home within the last 24 hours. If disinfection is needed, **always** follow the directions on the label and use a disinfectant product from [EPA List N \(https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus/about-list-n\)](https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus/about-list-n)

[disinfectants-coronavirus-covid-19-0](#)) that is effective against COVID-19. If products on EPA List N are not available, [bleach solutions](#) (<https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/emergency/hygiene-handwashing-diapering/household-cleaning-sanitizing.html>) can be used if appropriate for the surface.



Improve ventilation

Improving ventilation (air flow) can help prevent virus particles from accumulating in the air in your home. Good ventilation, along with other mitigation measures, can help prevent you from getting and spreading COVID-19.

Below are ways you can improve ventilation in your home. Use as many ways as you can (open windows, use air filters, and turn on fans) to help clear out virus particles in your home faster.

- **Bringing fresh, outdoor air into your home** helps keep virus particles from accumulating inside. **Do not open windows and doors if doing so is unsafe** (for example, presence of young children and pets, risk of falling, triggering asthma symptoms, high levels of outdoor pollution).
- **Filter the air in your home.**
 - In homes where the HVAC fan operation can be controlled by a thermostat, set the fan to the “on” position instead of “auto” when you have visitors. This allows the fan to run continuously, even if heating or air conditioning is not on.
 - **Pleated filters.** They are more efficient than ordinary furnace filters and can be found in hardware stores. They should be installed initially within the HVAC system by a professional, if possible. If that is not possible, carefully follow

the manufacturer's instructions to replace the filter yourself.

- Make sure the **filter fits properly in the unit**.
 - **Change your filter** every three months or according to the manufacturer's instructions.
 - Ideally, have the **ventilation system inspected and adjusted** by a professional every year to make sure it is operating efficiently.
 - If you do not have an HVAC system or just want extra filtration, consider using a **portable high-efficiency particulate air cleaner**. They are the most efficient filters on the market for trapping particles that people exhale when breathing, talking, singing, coughing, and sneezing. Be sure to select one that is the right size for the room(s) – one with a Clean Air Delivery Rate that meets or exceeds the square footage of the room in which it will be used.
- Turning on the exhaust fan in your bathroom and kitchen that vent outdoors can help move air outside. Although some stove exhaust fans do not send air outside, they can still improve air flow and keep virus particles from being concentrated in one place.
 - Use fans and ceiling fans to improve air flow whether windows are open or not. Be sure to point fans away from people. If windows can be opened, place fans as close to windows as possible and blowing outside. This helps get rid of virus particles in your home.

Learn more about preventing COVID-19 [here \(https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/index.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/index.html).

How
do I
prevent
and
prepare
for
COVID-
19?

(/prevention).

What do
I do if I
think I
was
exposed
to
COVID-
19?

(/exposure).

What
do I
do if
I'm
sick?

(/treatment).

What is the status of the COVID-19 outbreak? Am I at risk? +

What is the Florida Department of Health doing to address COVID-19? +

What are the symptoms and signs of COVID-19? +

How does the virus spread? +

Should I be concerned about pets or other animals and COVID-19? +

How can I protect myself? +

How long can COVID-19 survive in the environment? +

Are there disinfectants available that can inactivate (kill) COVID-19? +

Is it okay to have or go to large events?



[\(http://www.floridahealth.gov/\)](http://www.floridahealth.gov/)

[Public Services \(/public-services\)](#) [Resources \(/resources\)](#) [News \(/news\)](#)
[FAQs \(/frequently-asked-questions\)](#)
[Privacy Policy \(http://www.floridahealth.gov/privacy-policy.html\)](http://www.floridahealth.gov/privacy-policy.html)

Contact us

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