

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) SAFETY MEASURES

The strategies that may have served you well and kept you from getting sick until now may no longer be sufficient. With the new variants, people need to be rethinking their concept of risk. Here's a recap of the safety moves you should be making.



MAKE SURE YOUR COVID POD IS SECURE

Create a social bubble, or “pod” that includes one other person, couple, or family that you decide to mix with your household. This has to be a monogamous relationship. You need to have a formal conversation, with consent, that they aren't seeing anyone else and you aren't either. Otherwise, the chain of transmission can grow.



MASK UP AND BE SURE YOU'RE WEARING THE MASK CORRECTLY

The CDC continues to recommend mask wearing every time you are around other people. This is true even after you get the vaccine, since it's not yet clear whether you can still spread the disease to others even if it doesn't make you sick. If you've gotten lax about your mask-wearing habits as time has gone by, it's important that you wear your mask properly now. It should fit snugly around your face and, importantly, fully cover both your mouth and nose. Any mask with at least two layers of protection (not just one, as many neck gaiters have) are fine to use.



DOUBLE MASK AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE

While not a formal recommendation by infectious disease experts, wearing two masks, one over the other, is a good idea. Since each mask gaps around your face in a different location, double-masking provides a better seal around your nose and mouth. Put a cloth mask on first, because that can be washed. Top that with either a surgical mask or another cloth one.



GIVE UP SOCIAL ACTIVITIES INDOORS

Indoor activities, whether grabbing a coffee with a friend, attending a small dinner party in someone's home, or joining a group of pals in a bar or restaurant, are much riskier, especially with the more contagious variants beginning to circulate.



SKIP THE HAIRCUT, NAIL SALON, AND MORE

Getting your nails done or having a massage, or even spending an afternoon browsing at a shopping mall, is putting yourself and others at more risk. Even grocery shopping is more optional than most of us think. With online delivery services or curbside pickup available in many places, spending 45 minutes or an hour inside a supermarket may not be required.



IF YOU SOCIALIZE OUTSIDE, BE SURE YOU REALLY ARE OUTSIDE

The safest way to socialize remains outdoors, with one or two other people (plus those in your household), staying six feet apart and masking (or double-masking). The reason is that the risk of contracting the virus is much lower outside. If a tent is set up outdoors, at a minimum one side should be fully open, the CDC notes.



KEEP PRACTICING THE BASICS

With the emergency authorization of vaccines by Pfizer and Moderna, the end of the pandemic may finally be in sight. Yet even if you're one who has been vaccinated, or one who have already contracted the disease, it's important to continue with all safety precautions for now.