

## COVID-19: Tips on Getting Together Safely

As New York City reopens phase by phase, it is important to have strategies to stay safe while spending time with each other. We can make changes in our everyday lives to stop the spread of COVID-19.

### Remember these four key actions to prevent COVID-19 transmission:

- **Stay home if sick:** Stay home if you are sick unless you are leaving for essential medical care (including COVID-19 testing) or other essential errands.
- **Physical distancing:** Stay at least 6 feet away from others.
- **Wear a face covering:** Protect those around you. You can be contagious without symptoms and spread the disease when you cough, sneeze or talk. Face coverings help reduce the spread of COVID-19.
- **Practice healthy hand hygiene:** Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available; clean frequently touched surfaces regularly; avoid touching your face with unwashed hands; and cover your cough or sneeze with your arm, not your hands.

### Safer gathering

- **Develop and stick to a pandemic “social bubble”:** Try to limit in-person social gatherings to a core group of friends or family, even if you are attending a larger gathering, to minimize exposure to people outside your immediate group.
- **Know your own risk:** Avoid having close interactions with people age 65 or older or people with underlying health conditions.
- **Avoid big gatherings:** The more people there are gathered close together, the higher the possibility of spread is.
- **Enjoy the weather:** COVID-19 is more likely to spread when you meet indoors. Organize gatherings outside in the fresh air to further reduce risk.
- **Worship safely:** If your house of worship has reopened, wear a face covering, don’t share chalices or utensils and avoid close contact with others including hand shaking and hugging — wave instead.
- **Bring your own (BYO):** Sharing a beverage or passing food around can spread the virus. Bringing your own chairs or picnic blankets can help you maintain distance from others in the group.
- **Be creative:** Think of games that can be played further apart and that do not involve any physical contact, like charades.

### Safer sports

- **Run, walk, bicycle:** These are safe sports to do alone or with others — just keep at least 6 feet apart when you do or wear a face covering.
- **Avoid team sports:** Team sports involve close contact and can put you at risk.
- **Follow healthy hand hygiene when playing sports:** Frisbee and catch are better than team sports since you can keep a safe distance. Remember to wash your hands with soap

and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after playing. Do not touch your face while playing.

### **Don't be judgmental — educate others about staying safe**

- **Safe gatherings are possible:** Everyone needs social connection, and few New Yorkers have private outdoor space to sit in or a car to take them out of the city. As the city reopens, more people will be socializing. Support each other to do this safely rather than judging people for having in-person interactions.
- **Be polite:** Support good behavior. If you see someone not wearing a face covering, go with “Could you please wear a face covering near me?” rather than getting angry. If someone is too close, politely ask them “Can you please give us some space?”
- **If you feel unsafe, leave:** Leave gatherings where people aren't giving you enough space. [You can report crowding to 311.](#)

### **Know what your test results mean!**

- **Use test results with caution** in helping you make decisions about gatherings. For more information about COVID-19 tests and how to interpret results, visit [nyc.gov/health/coronavirus](https://nyc.gov/health/coronavirus) and search for **COVID-19 Testing: Frequently Asked Questions**.
- **A positive antibody test** for the virus that causes COVID-19 may indicate prior exposure, but it does not mean you are immune from reinfection.
- **A prior positive diagnostic test** (nose swab or saliva) means you have had COVID-19 and may be less likely to be reinfected. We do not know how strong that protection is or for how long it lasts.
- **Be cautious** in using these tests to make decisions about how or who to hang out with.

### **Protect each other**

- **Look out for your friends and neighbors.** Check in on people who are more isolated, older, or may have a health condition putting them at greater risk for severe COVID-19 illness. If you are not sick and not at greater risk, offer to run errands for them if they can't leave home.
- **Stop the spread:** Even if you are not worried about getting sick with COVID-19, you can protect your community by staying home as much as possible and wearing a face covering when outside your home.
- **Get tested:** There are now COVID-19 testing sites in all five boroughs. Visit [nyc.gov/covidtest](https://nyc.gov/covidtest) or call **311** for information and to find testing locations.

**The NYC Health Department may change recommendations as the situation evolves.**

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