

Novel Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) Frequently Asked Questions

Last Updated: **December 4, 2020**

The purpose of this document is to provide public health and community partners with frequently asked questions and answers that may be used to assist in responding to inquiries from their communities.

PLEASE NOTE: New or updated information appears in orange text.

GENERAL INFORMATION

What is a novel Coronavirus?

A novel coronavirus is a new coronavirus that has not been previously identified. The virus causing coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is not the same as the [coronaviruses that commonly circulate among humans](#) and cause mild illness like the common cold. Patients with COVID-19 will be evaluated and cared for differently than patients with the common coronaviruses. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

Is the COVID-19 virus the same as the MERS-CoV or SARS-CoV-1 virus?

No. The coronavirus causing COVID-19 is similar to *but not the same* as SARS-CoV-1 that caused the SARS epidemic in 2002 and the MERS Co-V that emerged in 2012. This is important because SARS-CoV-1 and MERS-CoV cause much more serious illness. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

ILLNESS AND SYMPTOMS

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Common symptoms of COVID-19 include fever or chills, cough, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, new loss of taste and smell, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, and headaches. Read more about the symptoms of COVID-19 here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>.

How do the symptoms of COVID-19 overlap with other syndromes?

The table below illustrates some of the **overlap** between the symptoms of COVID-19 and other common illnesses.

Symptoms of COVID-19	Strep Throat	Common Cold	Flu	Asthma	Seasonal Allergies	Norovirus
Fever or Chills	X		X			X
Cough		X	X	X	X	
Sore Throat	X	X	X		X	
Shortness of Breath or Difficulty Breathing				X		

Fatigue		X	X	X	X	
Nausea or Vomiting	X		X			X
Diarrhea	X		X			X
Congestion or Runny Nose		X	X		X	
Muscle or Body Aches	X	X	X			X
New Loss of Taste/Smell						
Headache	X	X	X		X	X

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/symptom-screening.html>

How sick are people with COVID-19?

Most people infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 will have no symptoms or mild symptoms. But some (especially those older than 65 years or with other medical conditions) may develop severe illness and even die.

Am I at high risk for serious illness or dying if I get this virus?

If you are at higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19, it is important for you to take actions to reduce your risk of getting this infection. Based on what we know now, those at high-risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are:

- [Older adults](#)
- [People with certain underlying medical conditions](#)

How can I prepare for an outbreak in my area?

Create a household plan of action to help protect your health and the health of those you care about in the event of an outbreak of COVID-19 in your community:

- Talk with the people who need to be included in your plan, and discuss what to do if a COVID-19 outbreak occurs in your community.
- Plan ways to care for those who might be at [greater risk for serious complications](#).
 - Make sure they have access to 2 weeks of medications and supplies in case you need to stay home for prolonged periods of time.
- Get to know your neighbors and find out if your neighborhood has a website or social media page to stay connected.
- Create a list of local organizations that you and your household can contact in the event you need access to information, healthcare services, support, and resources.
- Create an emergency contact list of family, friends, neighbors, carpool drivers, health care providers, teachers, employers, the local public health department, and other community resources

Is there a treatment for COVID-19?

People sick with COVID-19 can receive supportive care to help relieve symptoms, such as taking pain or fever medications, drinking plenty of fluids, and resting. Most people sick with COVID-19 can stay at home. Some patients who are very sick may need to go to the hospital.

What if think I might have COVID-19?

If you develop a fever, symptoms of respiratory illness, such as cough or shortness of breath, flu-like symptoms, or loss of taste or smell you should call your healthcare professional. Anyone with even mild symptoms of COVID-19 is encouraged to get tested. Testing options can be found on the [NH COVID-19 Website](#).

When can I go back to work after a respiratory illness/suspect COVID-19?

Any person with COVID-19 compatible symptoms [who is not tested and can be managed at home \(i.e., does not require hospitalization\)](#) should be instructed to [self-isolate](#) until:

At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared

AND

At least 1 day (24 hours) has passed since recovery*

Recovery is defined as a resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and improvement in respiratory symptoms.*

What is Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C)?

Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C) is a condition that causes inflammation in many parts of the body. We do not yet know what causes MIS-C. Many children with MIS-C have had the virus that causes COVID-19. Protect your child from COVID-19 by taking preventative actions such as washing or sanitizing hands often, avoiding those who are sick, practicing social distancing, having children over the age of 2 wear a cloth face covering in public settings, and frequently cleaning and disinfecting high-touch surfaces. For more information on MIS-C, visit the CDC's "For Parents: MIS-C" webpage: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/children/mis-c.html>

What should I do if I think my child is sick with MIS-C?

We know that many children with MIS-C had the virus that causes [COVID-19](#), or had been around someone with COVID-19. We do not yet know what causes MIS-C. MIS-C can be serious, even deadly, but most children who were diagnosed with this condition have gotten better with medical care.

If you think your child is sick with MIS-C or they are showing symptoms **Contact your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic right away**. Symptoms may include:

- Fever
- Abdominal pain
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Neck pain
- Rash
- Bloodshot eyes
- Feeling extra tired

Be aware that not all children will have all the same symptoms.

Seek emergency care right away if your child is showing any of these **emergency warning signs of MIS-C** or other concerning signs:

- Trouble breathing
- Pain or pressure in the chest that does not go away
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

- Severe abdominal pain

HOW THE VIRUS SPREADS

Can someone who has COVID-19 spread it to others?

Yes. The virus mainly spreads from person to person through small droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes and then these droplets land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby (within about 6 feet).

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#Spread>

How else is COVID-19 spread?

Besides the main person-to-person way described above, it is possible that a surface can become dirty with the virus from an infected person. The virus can then survive for a short period of time on that surface. If a person touches that dirty surface, that person can infect themselves by transferring the virus to their own nose, mouth, or eyes. This is much less common than from direct person-to-person contact, but it is why we are recommending frequent hand hygiene and cleaning surfaces that sick people may have coughed on or touched, like handrails.

COVID-19 can also sometimes be spread by airborne transmission (through the air):

- Some infections can be spread by exposure to virus in small droplets and particles that can linger in the air for minutes to hours. These viruses may be able to infect people who are further than 6 feet away from the person who is infected or after that person has left the space.
- This kind of spread is referred to as airborne transmission and is an important way that infections like tuberculosis, measles, and chicken pox are spread.
- There is evidence that under certain conditions, people with COVID-19 seem to have infected others who were more than 6 feet away. These transmissions occurred within enclosed spaces that had inadequate ventilation. Sometimes the infected person was breathing heavily, for example while singing or exercising.
 - Under these circumstances, scientists believe that the amount of infectious smaller droplet and particles produced by the people with COVID-19 became concentrated enough to spread the virus to other people. The people who were infected were in the same space during the same time or shortly after the person with COVID-19 had left.
- 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.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-covid-spreads.html>

Can someone spread the virus without being sick?

COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly through close contact from person-to-person in respiratory droplets from someone who is infected. People who are infected often have symptoms of illness. Some people without symptoms may be able to spread virus. COVID-19 is a new disease and **we are still learning about how it spreads** and the severity of illness it causes.

Am I at risk for COVID-19 from mail, packages or products?

There is still a lot that is unknown about COVID-19 and how it spreads. Coronaviruses are thought to be spread most often by respiratory droplets. Although the virus can survive for a short period on some surfaces, it is unlikely to be spread from domestic or international mail, products or packaging. However, it may be possible that people can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. Learn more:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#Spread>

Can the virus that causes COVID-19 be spread through food, including refrigerated or frozen foods?

Eating contaminated food is not a significant source of infection. Coronaviruses do not survive long on surfaces, so there is very low risk of spread from food products or packaging that are shipped over a period of days or weeks at ambient, refrigerated, or frozen temperatures. Coronaviruses mostly spread from person to person through respiratory droplets, as described above. It is always good practice to wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds before preparing or eating food. Learn more what is known about the [spread of COVID-19](#).

TESTING

How do I get tested for COVID-19?

Any person who is experiencing even mild symptoms of COVID-19 should be tested. These symptoms include, fever, cough, sore throat, runny nose, shortness of breath, fatigue, chills, muscle aches, loss of taste and smell and, in severe cases, difficulty breathing, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea. You can now request to be tested even if you are asymptomatic. To request a test contact your healthcare professional or find other testing options on our [NH COVID-19 website](#).

Any person with COVID-19 compatible symptoms [who is not tested and can be managed at home \(i.e., does not require hospitalization\)](#) should be instructed to [self-isolate](#) until:

At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared

AND

At least 1 day (24 hours) has passed since recovery*

Recovery is defined as a resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and improvement in respiratory symptoms.*

People who do not have symptoms but:

- Have been notified that they may have been exposed through close contact with a person with COVID-19 or a person likely to have COVID-19 (without testing); and,
- any persons who have traveled from [countries with widespread sustained transmission](#) should:
 - Get tested.
 - Stay home ([self-quarantine](#)) for 10 days from the last day of potential exposure.
 - It can take up to 14 days from the time someone is exposed to develop symptoms of COVID-19.

Can I test out of quarantine?

NH DHHS does not recommend routinely adopting the “test out” option in the new [CDC guidance](#). This “test out” option suggests a person could end quarantine after 7 days if the person tests negative for active SARS-CoV-2 infection within the 48 hours before ending quarantine. Currently testing resources are not sufficiently available to adopt this approach, and risk of transmission is increased.

What is COVID-19 antigen testing and when should it be used?

The antigen test detects certain proteins in the novel coronavirus. Most available antigen tests use a nasal swab to detect the presence of the virus and can produce results in minutes, so they are often used at the point-of-care and do not require shipping specimens to separate laboratories. In general, antigen tests are not as accurate as molecular tests (e.g., PCR-based tests), and may be more likely to miss some active infections (i.e., produce false-negative results) and produce false-positive results when infection is not truly present. In New Hampshire, antigen tests are intended for diagnosis for people [with symptoms](#) of COVID-19, and generally **should not be used to test a person who does not have symptoms of COVID-19. These tests may be appropriate for state-sponsored screening or surveillance programs in certain asymptomatic populations.** When used to test people without symptoms (asymptomatic), persons with a positive antigen test should submit a second specimen for PCR testing taken within 48 hours.

What is a COVID-19 antibody test and how can I get one?

Antibody testing checks a sample of a person's blood to look for antibodies to SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. These antibodies are produced when someone has been infected, so a positive result from this test indicates that person was likely previously infected with the virus. Antibody-based tests are now available through commercial laboratories for the detection of antibodies against SARS-CoV-2. Antibody tests should not be used to diagnose acute COVID-19 infection because it can take about 2 weeks after infection for antibody tests to be positive.

PERSONAL PREVENTION

When will there be a vaccine for COVID-19?

Visit our [New Hampshire COVID-19 Vaccination Planning](#) page for updated information on the development and planning around a COVID-19 vaccine.

How can I protect myself and others from COVID-19?

The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. You can take steps to slow the spread.

- [Stay at least 6 feet away from others](#), whenever possible. **This is very important in preventing the spread of COVID-19.**
- [Cover your mouth and nose with a mask](#) when around others. **This helps reduce the risk of spread both by close contact and by airborne transmission.**
- [Wash your hands](#) often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- [Avoid crowded indoor spaces](#) and [ensure indoor spaces are properly ventilated](#) by bringing in outdoor air as much as possible. In general, being outdoors and in spaces with good ventilation reduces the risk of exposure to infectious respiratory droplets.
- [Stay home and isolate](#) from others when sick.
- [Routinely clean and disinfect](#) frequently touched surfaces.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-covid-spreads.html>

Should I buy masks or wear one in public?

Through [Emergency Order #74](#), starting on November 20, 2020, all persons over the age of 5 within the State of New Hampshire are required to wear a mask or cloth face covering over their noses and mouths any time they are in public spaces, indoors or outdoors, where they are unable to or do not consistently maintain a physical distance of at least six feet from persons outside their own households.

Wearing a cloth face coverings or mask is not a substitute for physical distancing and other prevention measures. The wearing a mask or cloth face coverings should be two or more layers and should be worn over the nose and mouth. Wear masks or cloth face covering to protect yourself from getting or spreading COVID-19.

The use of facemasks is crucial for healthcare workers and people who are taking care of sick people in close settings (such as at home or in a healthcare facility). Buying unnecessary N95 and surgical masks depletes the supply for healthcare professionals who need them to reduce the spread of disease and keep you safe.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention-treatment.html>

CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

How do I clean and/or disinfect in a community facility?

CDC provides guidance for [Cleaning and Disinfection for Community Facilities](#) such as schools, institutions of higher education, offices, daycare centers, businesses, and community centers that do, and do not, house persons overnight.

How do I disinfect electronics such as tablets, touch screens, remote controls, and ATM machines?

The CDC offers guidance on [cleaning and disinfecting household items including electronics](#).

- If present, remove any visible contaminants.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions and recommendations for all cleaning and disinfection products.
- Consider using covers for electronics that can be easily wiped clean.
- If no manufacturer guidelines are available, consider using alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol to disinfect touch screens. Be sure to dry surfaces thoroughly to avoid pooling of liquids as this could damage electronics, screens, etc.

Are there special cleaning procedures that should be followed in response to COVID-19?

Clean any visibly dirty surfaces and then follow with a disinfectant for the prevention of COVID-19 and other viral respiratory illnesses. Public and private spaces should be routinely cleaned including all frequently touched surfaces such as desks, tables, chairs and doorknobs. No additional disinfection beyond routine cleaning is recommended at this time. Use cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas and follow the directions on the label. Have disposable wipes handy so that commonly used surfaces can be wiped down before each use. For more information on household cleaning, resources from the CDC, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/clean-disinfect/index.html>.

PLANNING

Should I plan for COVID-19?

Yes! Everyone has a role to play in getting ready and keeping yourself, your family and your community healthy! Check out these easy to follow recommendations from the CDC:

[Resources for Preparedness in the Home](#)

[Resources for Preparedness in the Workplace](#)

[Resources for Community Preparedness \(schools, businesses, etc.\)](#)

[Resources to Support People Experiencing Homelessness](#)

[Resources for Correctional and Detention Facilities](#)

ISOLATION AND QUARANTINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH MONITORING

What is isolation?

Isolation is used to separate people infected with the virus (those who are sick with COVID-19 from people who are not infected. People who are in isolation should stay home until it's safe for them to be around others. In the home, anyone sick or infected should separate themselves from others by staying in a specific "sick room" or area and using a separate bathroom (if available). A [self-isolation guide](#) can be found on the NH COVID-19 website.

What is quarantine?

Quarantine is used to keep someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others. Quarantine helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus but do not have symptoms. People in quarantine should stay home, separate themselves from others, monitor their health, and

follow directions from their state or local health department. A [self-quarantine guide](#) can be found on the NH COVID-19 website.

What is the difference between isolation and quarantine?

Check out [this poster](#) to learn more about the difference between isolation and quarantine.

Can household members of people under quarantine leave their home?

Yes. Household members and other close contacts of persons under quarantine are not required to stay home. As long as the person under quarantine does not show any symptoms, and the household members and other close contacts are well, those living in the same house as someone on quarantine can leave the home. If the person being quarantined develops illness, household members and other close contacts must then also stay home on quarantine.

EMPLOYERS AND BUSINESSES

What questions should employers be asking as part of employee screening?

Employers should reference the [NH COVID-19 General Travel and Quarantine Guidance & Employee Screening and Exclusion Criteria](#) for the most up-to-date screening practices.

When can workers return to work after an exposure to COVID-19?

Persons who report close contact to someone with COVID-19, or those reporting travel risk factors (as outlined above in the screening questions) must not be allowed into the facility unless they are eligible for the “exceptions to quarantine requirements” outlined below, and they should be instructed to self-quarantine at home.

A person can be allowed off “quarantine” and back to work when 10 days have passed from their last exposure or return from travel. People identified with higher-risk travel outside of New England (as outlined above in the screening questions) have the option of shortening their travel-related quarantine by getting a test on day 7 of their quarantine to test for active SARS-CoV-2 infection (SARS-CoV-2 is the novel coronavirus that causes COVID19); this test must be a molecular test (e.g., PCR-based test). Antigen tests are not accepted for this purpose. If the test is obtained on day 7 of quarantine, the person is asymptomatic, and the test is negative, then the person can end their quarantine early, but they must still self-observe for symptoms of COVID-19. Any new symptoms of COVID-19 should prompt the person to isolate and seek testing again (even if the person recently tested out of quarantine). This 7-day “test out” of quarantine option ONLY applies to travel-related quarantine (not quarantine due to a high-risk close contact exposure to a person with COVID-19).

People who are specifically identified as close contacts to someone diagnosed with COVID-19 must quarantine for a full 14 days and should themselves be tested, but testing for COVID-19 does not allow a person identified as a “close contact” to be released early from their 14 day quarantine; testing is only for the purpose of early identification of infection so that public health can perform contact tracing to identify additional people potentially at risk for COVID-19. For more information see [NH DHHS Employer Travel, Screening, and Exclusion Guidance](#)

What are the additional precautions that need to be implemented when a worker exposed to COVID-19 returns to the work place?

Critical infrastructure workers who have had an exposure to COVID-19 but **remain asymptomatic** should adhere to the following practices prior to and during their work shift:

- **Pre-Screen:** Employers should measure the employee’s temperature and assess symptoms prior to them starting work. Ideally, temperature checks should happen before the individual enters the facility.
- **Regular Monitoring:** As long as the employee doesn’t have a temperature or symptoms, they should self-monitor under the supervision of their employer’s occupational health program.

- **Wear a Mask:** The employee should wear a face mask at all times while in the workplace for 14 days after last exposure. Employers can issue facemasks or can approve employees' supplied cloth face coverings in the event of shortages.
- **Social Distancing:** The employee should maintain a physical distance of 6 feet from others as work duties permit in the workplace.
- **Disinfect and Clean work spaces:** Clean and disinfect all areas such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment routinely.

When can employees return to work after travel?

Employers should follow the [NH COVID-19 General Travel and Quarantine Guidance & Employee Screening and Exclusion Criteria](#) in regards to travel for staff in all workplace settings including businesses, education, and healthcare facilities.

Should I require my employee to provide a note to validate their illness?

No. The CDC and NH DHHS do not recommend that employers require a provider's note for employees who have been sick with acute respiratory illness. This cannot usually be provided in an efficient manner, so it can reduce your workforce and impair your continuity of operations. We suggest instead that businesses adopt a non-test based strategy, including:

At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared	AND	At least 1 day (24 hours) has passed since recovery*
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**Recovery is defined as a resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath).*

If a person who was previously positive for COVID-19 travels outside New England, do they need to quarantine upon return to New Hampshire?

If traveling outside the New England area, upon return the person should quarantine. At this time we do not know if exposure to COVID-19 builds any immunity to future infection.

Where can I find more information around COVID-19 and businesses?

You can find frequently asked questions and answers on [The New Hampshire Division of Economic Development](#) website.

RISKS TO PETS AND ANIMALS

What risks do animals or animal products pose?

- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): A small number of pets worldwide, including cats and dogs, have been [reported](#) to be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, mostly after close contact with people with COVID-19.
- Based on the limited information available to date, the risk of animals spreading COVID-19 to people is considered to be low.
- It appears that the virus that causes COVID-19 can spread from people to animals in some situations.
- Treat pets as you would other human family members – do not let pets interact with people outside the household.
- This is a rapidly evolving situation and information will be updated as it becomes available.

For more information, visit CDC's [If You Have Pets](#) webpage.

What if I'm sick with COVID-19 and have pets?

We are still learning about this virus, but it appears that it can spread from people to animals in some situations, especially after close contact with a person with COVID-19.

While you are sick with COVID-19, avoid contact with your pet, including petting, snuggling, being kissed or licked, and sharing food. Whenever possible, have another member of your household care for your animals while you are sick. If you must care for your pet or be around animals while you are sick, wash your hands before and after you interact with pets and wear a facemask. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#animals>

TRAVEL-RELATED CONCERNS

Should travelers wear facemasks or coverings?

Because COVID-19 is spreading in the United States and abroad, CDC recommends that everyone wear a [cloth face covering](#) over their nose and mouth when in public, including during travel. Wear a cloth face covering, keep at least 6 feet of physical distance from others, and practice [other everyday preventive actions](#) to protect yourself and others from COVID-19. Cloth face coverings may slow the spread of COVID-19 by helping keep people who are infected from spreading the virus to others. Medical masks and N-95 respirators are for healthcare workers and other first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/faqs.html>

Should I travel within the United States?

COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths across the United States are rising. Because travel increases your chances of getting infected and spreading COVID-19, staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others from getting sick. If you are considering traveling, check out the [CDC's questions](#) to ask yourself and your loved ones beforehand. These questions can help you decide what is best for you and your family. For additional travel information visit the [CDC's COVID-19 Travel page](#).

Is it safe to travel to visit family or friends?

Travel increases your chances of getting and spreading COVID-19. Before you travel, learn if [coronavirus 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 information visit [CDCs Travel During the COVID-19 Pandemic page](#).

For the upcoming holiday season, celebrating virtually or with members of your own household (who are consistently taking measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19) poses the lowest risk for spread. Your household is anyone who currently lives and shares common spaces in your housing unit (such as your house or apartment). This can include family members, as well as roommates or people who are unrelated to you. People who do not currently live in your housing unit, such as college students who are returning home from school for the holidays, should be considered part of different households. In-person gatherings that bring together family members or friends from different households, including college students returning home, pose varying levels of risk. For more information on celebrating safely, visit [CDC's Holiday Celebrations and Small Gatherings page](#).

Is it safe to travel to campgrounds/go camping?

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. [CDCs Travel During the COVID-19 Pandemic page](#).

What if I recently traveled and am sick?

If you get sick with fever or cough in the **10 days** after you return from travel:

- Stay home. Avoid contact with others.

- Follow our [self-quarantine guidelines](#).
- Contact your medical provider or visit our [website for options on how to get tested](#).
- You might have COVID-19; most people are able to recover at home without medical care.
- If you have trouble breathing or are worried about your symptoms, call or text a health care provider. Tell them about your recent travel and your symptoms.
- Call ahead before you go to a doctor's office or emergency room.

If you need to seek essential medical care for other reasons, such as dialysis, call ahead to your doctor and tell them about your recent travel.

What about families of people who have recently traveled?

There is no public health reason to exclude family members of people with no symptoms who were in an area with active community spread of disease in the previous **10 days**. Family members who did not travel may go to school or work if the person who traveled has no symptoms.

I am traveling internationally. Should I cancel?

[CDC recommends](#) that you avoid all nonessential international travel because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Travel notices are based on assessment of the potential health risks involved with traveling to a certain area. [Visit CDCs COVID-19 Travel Recommendations by Country](#).

If you must travel, take the following routine precautions:

- Clean your hands often.
 - Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in a public place, after touching surfaces frequently touched by others, after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing, and before touching your face or eating.
 - If soap and water are not available, bring and use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub your hands together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with others.
 - Keep 6 feet of physical distance from others.
- Wear a cloth face covering in public.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.
- Pick up food at drive-through restaurants, use curbside restaurant services, or stores.
- Make sure you are up to date with your routine vaccinations, including measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine and the seasonal flu vaccine.

If you travel to a location with any level of travel advisory for COVID-19, when you return, you should remain alert for fever or respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) and [self-quarantine](#).

Is it safe to go on a cruise?

CDC recommends that all people [defer travel on cruise ships](#), including river cruises, worldwide. That's because the risk of COVID-19 on cruise ships is high. People with an [increased risk of serious illness](#) should especially defer travel on cruise ships, including river cruises. CDC has issued a [Level 4 Travel Health Notice](#) for cruise ship travel.

Passengers who decide to travel should take the following steps to protect others after their return from a cruise ship or river cruise voyage:

- [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.
- Follow [state and local](#) recommendations or requirements after you return from travel ([NH Travel Guidance](#))

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.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATIONS

For an up to date list of community exposures to COVID-19 visit our [Special Notices page](#).

NH DHHS, DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES (DPHS) RESPONSE

We care deeply about the health and wellbeing of the people of NH. We are committed to sharing accurate information with the public to ensure the optimal health and wellbeing of all NH residents while also ensuring we uphold the highest privacy standards for individual patients. As an organization we rely on the best available science and evidence-based practices. In rapidly evolving situations such as this we will provide updated information as it becomes available.

NH DPHS has been working closely with the CDC since the first case of COVID-19 was detected in the United States. We are working very closely with our healthcare and public health partners. Visit our website for our full [case investigation and contact tracing plan](#).

In outbreaks such as this, public health recommendations may change. We encourage you to check these key resources frequently for updates:

- [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)
- [NH Department of Health and Human Services \(NH DHHS\)](#)
- [NH DHHS Educational Institution Novel Coronavirus 2019 \(COVID-19\) Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#)
- [NH DHHS Novel Coronavirus 2019 \(COVID-19\) Provider Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#)

KEY CONTACTS

Topic/Inquiry	Contact	Phone/Email
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General Information www.nh.gov/covid19 ▪ 	2-1-1 New Hampshire	1-866-444-4211 TTY: 603-634-3388
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Supply Issues 	Requests for PPE need to be submitted electronically	https://prd.blogs.nh.gov/dos/hsem/?page_id=8673
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Media Inquiries ▪ Requests for Media Support 	State of NH Joint Information Center	603-223-6169 JIC@dos.nh.gov
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Testing for COVID-19 	Contact your healthcare provider or visit our website	Testing Webpage: https://www.nh.gov/covid19/resources-guidance/testing-guidance.htm COVID Testing Registration Form: https://business.nh.gov/DOS_COVID19Testing/