

Thanksgiving Guidance

Be Creative While Maintaining Safety Precautions

Adapted from Tacoma-Pierce County Health Dept & MPRnews "How to Holiday"
11/18/20

<p>Best bet: Go virtual</p> <p>The best-case, lowest-risk scenario is to stay home.</p> <p>Don't plan for an in-person gathering. Schedule a video call — or several.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Bonus: There's less cooking and cleaning involved.</p>	<p>Next best: Go outdoors; skip dinner</p> <p>For a lot of people, being away from family at the holidays — despite the option of connecting remotely — is unfathomable.</p> <p>There are still safe options available — and they're all outside.</p> <p>Go for a long walk together — or hang out in a park.</p> <p>If you do: Wear masks and don't eat together. Choose food and drink options that are not self-serve to limit the use of share serving utensils, handles, buttons, or touchscreens.</p> <p>Eating is risky, because it's impossible to wear a mask.</p>
<p>Getting riskier: Go small</p> <p>But many holidays are often all <i>about</i> food — and given the snowy, icy weather lately, it's a good bet that most people aren't looking forward to socializing outside, either.</p> <p>Amid spiking cases, though, state officials are pleading with Wisconsinites not to gather for Thanksgiving outside their immediate household and asking college students to consider not going home for the holiday.</p> <p>Organizers should consider the risk of viral spread on event size and when mixing with a different households pose varying levels or risk.</p>	<p>Wild card: How to be nimble when plans — or family members — throw you for a curve</p> <p>It's hard to control the behavior of others — especially family. Sometimes you just walk into a bad situation.</p> <p>Maybe there are 20 people at Thanksgiving instead of 10.</p> <p>Or everyone's crowded up in the kitchen, eating with their fingers.</p> <p>Nobody's wearing masks. Unexpected curveballs will happen to lots of well-intentioned people, Foster said. What to do?</p> <p>LEAVE if you're not comfortable with the setup. But if you decide to stay, wear your mask, and enjoy yourself, then shift to damage control such as duration of gathering, congregating in different areas, distancing and of course, mask-up!</p> 

Help limit the spread.

Do not host or go to gatherings if you or someone you live with:

- Tests positive for COVID-19.
- Has COVID-19 symptoms.
- Is waiting for COVID-19 test results.
- Was near someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days.
- Has a higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

Before you gather (normally, this is a 14 day window)

- Get tested if you have been around many other people or do not wear a mask. Plan ahead, it can take a few days to receive test results. You still need to wear a mask and stay 6 feet away from others if you test negative.
- Consider avoiding contact with people outside your household for 14 days before the gathering. Bring extra masks, hand sanitizer and tissues.
- Avoid crowded, poorly ventilated or fully enclosed indoor spaces. Outdoor activities are safer than indoor activities.
- Ask the host if they have steps in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- Keep it local.
- Kids have trouble playing 6 feet apart. Wear masks and wash hands often. Kids under 2 shouldn't wear masks.

If you plan to host

- Remind invited guests to stay home if they have been exposed to COVID-19 in the last 14 days or are showing COVID-19 symptoms.
- Make safety a priority.
 - Ask guests to avoid contact with people they don't live with for 14 days before you gather.
 - Set ground rules so guests know what to expect.
- Open windows and doors for fresh air or host outdoor activities if possible.
- Keep gatherings to 5 or fewer people you don't live with. You must be able to stay 6 feet away from people you don't live with.
- Make a food plan. Encourage guests to bring food and drinks for themselves instead of potluck-style gatherings. If sharing, separate food ahead of time into individual portions.
- [Clean and disinfect](#) any surfaces your guests may encounter.
- Remind guests to wash their hands before serving or eating food.
- Limit the number of people handling or serving food.

Before you travel

- Avoid traveling to an area with more cases, which will increase your risk of getting infected and spreading the virus to others.

- Consider not traveling if you live with someone at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19 or are at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
- [Make a plan for what to do if you or one of your traveling companions gets sick.](#)

If you travel

- Delay or do not travel if you are sick, have tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 10 days, or have been exposed to a person with COVID-19.
- Check with your travel companies' websites to see what they are doing to protect travelers from COVID-19 and what policies you may have to follow.
- Bring your own food. If you stop for food, opt for drive-through, take-out, or outdoor dining rather than in-person dining.
- Bring extra masks and hand sanitizer for your travels.
- Wash your hands frequently.
- Wear a mask and stay at least 6 feet away from others not in your household.

After you travel

- Monitor your health. If you develop [COVID-19 symptoms](#), get [tested](#).
- Remember you can potentially spread the virus 14 days after exposure. Wear a mask and stay at least 6 feet away from others.

While you gather

Wash your hands early and often

- Ask guests to wash hands when they arrive, before and after eating, and before they leave.
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if there is no soap and water.

Practice safe 6 and limit close contact

- Stay 6 feet away from people you don't live with.
- Avoid using the bathroom at busy times like at the end of an event.
- If you plan to eat out at a restaurant, avoid busy eating areas and times.
- Wave and verbally greet people instead of shaking hands, elbow bumps or hugs. Prepare kids ahead of time to do the same.

Wear masks

- Wear a mask when not eating and around people you don't live with.
- Don't sing, chant or shout, especially when not wearing a mask and within 6 feet of others.

Avoid commonly touched surfaces or shared items

- [Clean and disinfect](#) commonly touched surfaces and any shared items frequently.
- Use touchless garbage cans if available.