

# COVID-19

CASES ARE RISING.  
**ACT NOW!**



## Travel: Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

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The COVID-19 pandemic is a rapidly evolving situation and CDC guidance is updated frequently.

### General

## Do I need to get tested before I travel?

For **international** travel, CDC issued an [Order](#) requiring all air passengers arriving to the United States from foreign countries to get tested with a [viral test](#) (NAAT or antigen) no more than 3 days before their flight departs and to provide proof of the negative result to the airline before boarding the flight. Air passengers who have had a positive viral test for COVID-19 in the past 3 months, and have [met the criteria to end isolation](#), may travel instead with documentation of their positive viral test results and a letter from their healthcare provider or a public health official that states they have been cleared for travel. The positive test result and letter together are referred to as “documentation of recovery.”

For travel from the United States to another country or a U.S. territory, CDC recommends that you get tested with a [viral test](#) no more than 3 days before you travel internationally. Travelers should additionally follow any requirements at their destination.

CDC also recommends that you [get tested](#) 3-5 days after international air travel **AND** stay home for 7 days. Even if you test negative, stay home for the full 7 days. If you don't get tested, it's safest to stay home for 10 days after travel. See CDC's [Testing and International Air Travel](#) for more information.

For **domestic** travel, CDC recommends travelers consider getting tested with a viral test no more than 3 days before travel. Also consider getting tested 3-5 days after travel **AND** reducing non-essential activities for a full 7 days, even if you test negative. If you don't get tested, consider reducing non-essential activities for 10 days after travel.

If your test is positive or you have [symptoms of COVID-19](#), [isolate](#) yourself to protect others from getting infected and follow public health recommendations.

Testing does not eliminate all risk, but when combined with [precautions](#) like [wearing masks](#), [social distancing](#), and [handwashing](#), it can make travel safer by reducing spread on public transportation, in airports, and at destinations.

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## If I travel, what steps should I take to help reduce my chance of getting sick or getting someone else sick?

Travel may increase your chance of getting and spreading COVID-19. Postponing travel and **staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.**

**Delay travel** if you are waiting for test results, test positive, are sick, or have been around someone with COVID-19 in the past 14 days. Find out more about [When to Delay Travel](#).

If you travel, take these steps before or during your trip to [protect yourself and others](#) from COVID-19:

- [Get tested](#) no more than 3 days before your flight departs.
- Check [travel restrictions](#) before you go.
- Get your flu shot before you travel.
- Bring extra supplies, such as masks and hand sanitizer.
- Know when to delay your travel. Do not travel if you or your travel companions are sick.
- Wear a [mask](#) to keep your nose and mouth covered when in public settings, including on [public transportation and in transportation hubs such as airports and stations](#).
- Avoid close contact by [staying at least 6 feet apart](#) (about 2 arm lengths) from anyone who is not from your travel group.
- [Wash your hands](#) often or use hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol).
- Avoid contact with anyone who is sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Consider getting tested with a viral test 1-3 days before travel.
- Watch your health for symptoms of COVID-19.

**Do not travel if you test positive or have symptoms of COVID-19;** immediately [isolate](#) yourself, and follow [public health recommendations](#).

After traveling **internationally** –

- Get tested with a viral test 3-5 days after travel **AND** stay home for 7 days after travel. Even if your test is negative, stay home for the full 7 days. If your test is positive or you have symptoms of COVID-19, isolate yourself to protect others from getting infected and follow public health recommendations
- If you don't get tested, it's safest to stay home for 10 days after travel.

After traveling **domestically** –

- Consider getting tested with a viral test 3-5 days after travel **AND** reducing non-essential activities for a full 7 days after travel, even if your test is negative. If your test is positive or you have symptoms of COVID-19, isolate yourself to protect others from getting infected and follow public health recommendations
- If you don't get tested, consider reducing non-essential activities for 10 days.

## Should I wear a mask?

CDC recommends that everyone wear a [mask](#) over their nose and mouth when in public, including [on public transportation and in transportation hubs such as airports and stations](#). Masks slow the spread of COVID-19 because they help keep people who are infected from spreading respiratory droplets to others when they cough, sneeze, or talk. Medical masks and N-95 respirators are for healthcare workers and other first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance.

Some people shouldn't wear masks:

- Children younger than 2 years old
- Anyone who has trouble breathing
- Anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without help

## What if I recently traveled and get sick?

See CDC's website [What to Do If You Are Sick](#).

## How can I protect myself from COVID-19 when using different types of transportation?

See CDC's website [Protect Yourself When Using Transportation](#).

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# Domestic Travel

## Can traveling to visit family or friends increase my chances of getting and spreading COVID-19?

Yes. Travel can increase your chance of getting and spreading COVID-19. Postponing travel and staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others from COVID-19. Before you travel, learn if COVID-19 cases are high or increasing in your community or your destination, as well as whether hospitals in these locations are overwhelmed with patients who have COVID-19. 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 considerations see the webpage [Domestic Travel During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#).

## Does traveling to campgrounds or going camping pose any risks?

Yes. 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. [Follow these actions](#) when visiting a park.

## Am I required to quarantine after domestic travel?



CDC does not require that domestic travelers undergo a mandatory federal quarantine, but does recommend travelers do the following after domestic travel –

- [Get tested](#) with a viral test 3-5 days after travel **AND** reduce [non-essential activities](#) for 7 days.
  - Even if you test negative, reduce non-essential activities for a full 7 days after travel.
  - If your test is positive, [isolate](#) yourself to protect others from getting infected.
- If you don't get tested, consider reducing non-essential activities for 10 days after travel.
- Avoid being around people who are at [increased risk for severe illness](#) for 14 days, whether you get tested or not.
- If you test positive or have symptoms of COVID-19, [isolate](#) yourself to protect others from getting infected and follow public health recommendations.

Also take these actions for 14 days after you return from travel to protect others from getting COVID-19:

- [Stay at least 6 feet/2 meters](#) (about 2 arm lengths) from anyone who did not travel with you, particularly in crowded areas. It's important to do this everywhere — both indoors and outdoors.
- [Wear a mask](#) to keep your nose and mouth covered when you are in shared spaces outside of your home, including when using [public transportation](#) and in transportation hubs such as airports and stations.
- If there are people in the household who did not travel with you, [wear a mask](#) and ask everyone in the household to wear masks in shared spaces inside your home.
- [Wash your hands](#) often or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid being around people who are at [increased risk for severe illness](#).
- Watch your health: Look for [symptoms of COVID-19](#), and take your temperature if you feel sick.
  - [Isolate](#) yourself and follow public health recommendations if you get sick.

Always follow [state and local](#) recommendations or requirements related to travel.

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## International Travel

## Should I avoid traveling internationally?

Travel can increase your chance of getting and spreading COVID-19. Postponing travel and staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others from COVID-19. To check travel recommendations for a certain destination, see [COVID-19 Travel Recommendations by Destination](#).

Follow entry requirements or restrictions at your destination which might include testing, quarantine, and providing contact information. Check with your destination's Office of Foreign Affairs or Ministry of Health or the [US Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs, Country Information](#)  for details about entry requirements and restrictions for arriving travelers. If you test positive on arrival, you might be required to isolate. You might be prevented from returning to the United States as scheduled.

Before return to the United States, you must get tested no more than 3 days before your flight to the US departs. Make sure to be tested with a [viral test](#) (NAAT or antigen test) to determine if you are currently infected with COVID-19. Also make sure that you receive your results before your flight departs and have documentation of your results to show the airline.

CDC also recommends all travelers [avoid all cruise ship travel worldwide](#).

## What can I expect when departing other countries?

Air passengers traveling to the US are required to provide a negative COVID-19 test result or documentation of recovery from COVID-19. Airlines must confirm the negative test result or documentation of recovery for all passengers before boarding. If a passenger chooses not to provide a test result or documentation of recovery, the airline must deny boarding to the passenger.

Get tested no more than 3 days before your flight to the US departs. Make sure to be tested with a [viral test](#) (NAAT or antigen test) to determine if you are currently infected with COVID-19. Also make sure that you receive your results before your flight departs and have documentation of your results to show the airline.

Some countries are conducting exit screening for all passengers leaving their destination. Before being permitted to board a departing flight, you may have your temperature taken and be asked questions about your travel history and health.

## What should I do after I arrive in the United States?

If you traveled by air or had [higher risk exposures](#) during travel-

- [Get tested](#) with a viral test 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 or you have symptoms of COVID-19, [isolate](#) yourself to protect others from getting infected and follow public health recommendations.
- If you don't get tested, it's safest to stay home for 10 days after travel.
- Avoid being around people who are at [increased risk for severe illness](#) for 14 days, whether you get tested or not.
- Always follow [state and local](#) recommendations or requirements related to travel.

Regardless of where you traveled or what you did during your trip, take these actions to protect others from getting COVID-19 for 14 days after travel:

- [Stay at least 6 feet/2 meters](#) (about 2 arm lengths) from anyone who did not travel with you, particularly in crowded areas. It's important to do this everywhere — both indoors and outdoors.
- [Wear a mask](#) to keep your nose and mouth covered when you are in shared spaces outside of your home, including when using [public transportation](#).
- If there are people in the household who did not travel with you, [wear a mask](#) and ask everyone in the household to wear masks in shared spaces inside your home for 14 days after travel.
- [Wash your hands](#) often or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid being around people who are at [increased risk for severe illness](#).
- Watch your health: Look for [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, and take your temperature if you feel sick.
  - [Isolate](#) yourself and follow public health recommendations if you get sick.

## When can I return to work after international travel?

See CDC's [After You Travel Internationally](#) webpage to learn what precautions you should take.

## How does CDC determine the level of COVID-19 of a destination?

CDC reviews data reported to the World Health Organization daily to determine a destination's COVID-19 Travel Health Notice level. There are a few factors that CDC considers when determining the level of a destination. To find out more about the COVID-19 Travel Health Notice levels, visit [How CDC Determines the Level for COVID-19 Travel Health Notices](#).

These notices offer travel recommendations based on the level of COVID-19 in a destination. To learn more about COVID-19 travel recommendations for a specific destination, visit [COVID-19 Travel Recommendations by Destination](#).

## How often are international travel recommendations related to COVID-19 updated?

Recommendations are updated weekly. CDC reviews data reported to the World Health Organization daily to determine a destination's COVID-19 Travel Health Notice level and makes appropriate level changes once a week. To find out more about the COVID-19 Travel Health Notice levels, visit [How CDC Determines the Level for COVID-19 Travel Health Notices](#).

## Does CDC require quarantine after international travel?

CDC does not require that international travelers undergo mandatory federal quarantine, but does recommend travelers do the following after an international flight-

- [Get tested with a viral test](#) 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 or you have symptoms of COVID-19, [isolate](#) yourself to protect others from getting infected and follow public health recommendations
- If you don't get tested, it's safest to stay home for 10 days after travel.
- Avoid being around people who are at [increased risk for severe illness](#) for 14 days, whether you get tested or not.
- Always follow [state and local](#) recommendations or requirements related to travel.

Does CDC require that travelers get a test before entering the United States? 

CDC requires all air passengers arriving to the US from a foreign country to get tested no more than 3 days before their flight departs and to provide proof of the negative result to the airline before boarding the flight. Air passengers who have had a positive viral test for COVID-19 in the past 3 months, and have [met the criteria to end isolation](#), may travel instead with documentation of their positive viral test results and a letter from their healthcare provider or a public health official that states they have been cleared for travel. The positive test result and letter together are referred to as “documentation of recovery.” For more information on this testing requirement, please visit the [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

For more information see CDC’s [Testing and International Air Travel](#) page. Always follow [state and local](#) recommendations or requirements related to travel.

What restrictions might be in place in other countries that affect US travelers? 

Check with your destination’s Office of Foreign Affairs or Ministry of Health or the [US Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs, Country Information](#)  for details about entry requirements and restrictions for arriving travelers.

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## Air or Cruise Travel

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.

[CDC strongly recommends everyone wear a mask on public transportation](#) and at transportation hubs, including on airplanes and in airports.

What happens if there is a sick passenger on an international or domestic flight? 

Under current federal regulations, pilots must report all illnesses and deaths to CDC before arriving to a U.S. destination. According to CDC disease protocols, if a sick traveler is considered a risk to the public's health, CDC works with local and state health departments and international public health agencies to contact exposed passengers and crew.

Be sure to give the airline your current contact information when booking your ticket so you can be notified if you are exposed to a sick traveler on a flight.

For more information, see the CDC webpage [Protecting Travelers' Health from Airport to Community: Investigating Contagious Diseases on Flights](#).

Should I delay going on a cruise? 

Yes. CDC recommends that all travelers [avoid all cruise ship travel worldwide](#), including river boats. Recent reports of COVID-19 on cruise ships highlight the risk of infection to cruise ship passengers and crew. Like many other viruses, COVID-19 appears to spread more easily between people in close quarters aboard ships. At this time, cruise ship passenger operations remain suspended in U.S. waters under CDC's [Framework for Conditional Sailing Order](#).

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For information about traveling in the United States: [Travel During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

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