How to Stay Safe During Re-opening

As businesses, restaurants, and other public spaces re-open, there are things you can do to protect yourself and others from the novel coronavirus, the virus that causes COVID-19.

In any situation, there is always risk of infection, but it is important to:

- wear a face covering in public;
- wash your hands often for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, or use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol; and
- practice social distancing by staying 6 feet away from others.

In a restaurant

- Eating outside poses a lower risk of infection than eating indoors. If you are eating indoors, look for space between tables and open windows.
- Try dining at “off-peak” times.
- Avoid buffets and self-serve drinks.
- Restaurant staff should wear masks, and have proper sanitizing procedures in place.

At daycare

- Daycare is an essential service for many working parents. When considering your options, look for daycares that keep groups small and consistent day-to-day.
- All teachers and staff should wear personal protective equipment, such as masks. Careful cleaning and regular hand washing are also essential.
- All children and staff should be screened each day for infection symptoms.

In a hair salon

- Seek out salons that limit the number of clients allowed inside, encourage patrons and staff to wear masks, and enforce appropriate social distancing measures. If possible, salon windows should be opened to help with ventilation.
- Consider washing your own hair prior to arriving to limit the amount of time in the salon.

While traveling and commuting

- Air travel carries risk, but some travel may be essential. Consider taking shorter flights with fewer passengers and wear a mask at all times.
- To stay safe while taking public transportation and ride-shares, try to ride at off-peak hours and limit travel to essential trips.
- At airports, train stations, or bus stops, always maintain a safe distance from other passengers when possible.
Social distancing guidelines are confusing. How far away from someone do I really need to be to avoid COVID-19 transmission?
The easy answer is the farther apart, the better. CDC recommends 6 feet between people; however, when social distancing is not possible, masks play an even more important role, especially in enclosed spaces such as trains, buses, etc. Besides distance, limiting the amount of time in contact is important.

Is it OK to meet my friends outdoors for gatherings if we maintain social distancing?
There is nothing wrong with meeting friends outdoors but try to keep the groups small and ensure that everyone is healthy and symptom-free, in addition to maintaining appropriate social distance. Keeping your friend groups consistent also reduces your exposure to the coronavirus.

When will it be safe for large indoor gatherings?
It's hard to predict, so keep indoor gatherings small for now and make sure people are wearing masks and staying socially distant. More people means more risk.

Can I hug my friends, parents, and loved ones?
Yes, if your loved ones have been social distancing and don't have symptoms, a quick hug is probably low risk. Life is short. Hugging lots of friends at a party, however, increases risk, so find an alternative greeting.

Can I go for a walk or a run without wearing a mask?
Yes, if you are outdoors and walking or running on your own or with one other person and keeping a reasonable distance, it's OK to skip the mask. However, keep one in your pocket in case you need it.

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