

Step-by-step guide to assessing your holiday risk environment



Prepare



Assess the risk of those who plan to gather in your holiday bubble



Assess the COVID-19 disease burden in the community where you will gather to celebrate, and the community (or communities) from where you and your guest(s) will be traveling.



Assess your personal risk tolerance.



Add the results



Refer to Managing Your Holiday Bubble in Lower and Higher Risk Environments



Let's Get Started!



Step 0: Prepare

- Get your influenza vaccine
- If you are unvaccinated against COVID-19, get a complete vaccination series, along with a booster dose if eligible, as soon as possible.

Note: There are very few people who should not receive a COVID-19 vaccine for medical reasons. You should not receive it if you had a severe allergic reaction (e.g., anaphylaxis) after a previous dose of the COVID-19 vaccine or to a component of the COVID-19 vaccine.

Some people incorrectly believe that they should not get the vaccine if they have a serious chronic medical condition. The opposite is actually true. It is even more important that those with medical conditions become immunized. If you feel you should not receive the vaccine, please discuss with your personal physician.

If you previously had a documented case of COVID-19, the best available evidence at this time is you will still benefit from vaccination.

Receiving a COVID-19 vaccination series is the most important action you can take to protect yourself, and those around you.

- Who will participate in your holiday bubble? Share this document and use it to guide a conversation with friends and family as you make your holiday plans.

Step 1: Assess the risk of those who plan to gather in your holiday bubble

- Visit the CDC site: *People with Certain Medical Conditions* <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html> and review the conditions that may put you or others at risk of a bad outcome from COVID-19.

Note if anyone participating in your holiday gathering is in a high-risk group.

- Score the risk of your bubble participants (select the highest score applicable):

One or more bubble participants are in a high-risk group: **5 Points**

No one is high-risk, but at least one bubble participant is unvaccinated (including children): **3 Points**

No one is high-risk, and all are vaccinated: **1 Point**

Record your point value (1, 3 or 5)

A

Step 2: Assess the COVID-19 disease burden in at least two communities: The community where you will gather to celebrate, and the community (or communities) from where you and your guest(s) will be traveling.

- Visit the CDC site: *COVID-19 Integrated County View* <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view>
- A US map will come up. Click on the county where you will be gathering for the holidays (you may need to zoom in on your state), and the counties from where you and your guests are traveling.
- When you click on these counties, the site will take you to a “Community Transmission” chart. Make sure “7-day Metrics” is selected. Look at the number listed for “Case Rate per 100k.” For all the counties you review, write down this number. Give yourself a score based on the case rate, using the highest county rate you identified:



100 or above:

Score 3 points

50 or above, but less than 100:

Score 2 points

Less than 50:

Score 1 point

Record your point value (1, 2, or 3)

B

Step 3: Assess your personal risk tolerance.

Select one of the following statements which most closely reflects your current degree of concern regarding COVID-19:

- I, or others in my holiday bubble, continue to have a significant degree of concern that we may contract COVID-19, or spread it to others. **Score 2 points.**
- Although I recognize COVID-19 remains a significant threat to public health, I am not overly concerned about personally contracting the disease or spreading it to my friends and family. My friends and family all have a similar low degree of concern. **Score 1 point.**

Record your point value (1 or 2)

C

Step 4: Add the results from Box A + B + C above. You should have a score that falls between “3” and “10,” inclusive. Record that number below:

My COVID-19 Holiday Bubble Risk Score (from 3-10):



Step 5: Refer to Managing Your Holiday Bubble in Lower and Higher Risk Environments (on the next page).

Assessing your Score**Managing Your Holiday Bubble in Lower and Higher Risk Environments**

If your Holiday Bubble Risk Score is less than or equal to “5” your planned holiday gathering has a relatively lower risk. In planning a safe holiday gathering, follow the recommendations in the *Lower Risk Environment* column.

If your Holiday Bubble Risk Score is from “6-10” your planned holiday gathering has a relatively higher risk. In planning a safe holiday gathering, follow the recommendations in the *Higher Risk Environment* column.

	Lower Risk Environment	Higher Risk Environment
<i>COVID-19 Vaccination</i>	Absent a true medical reason not to be vaccinated, get vaccinated. Complete your vaccination series at least two weeks prior to your planned holiday gathering. Get a booster if eligible.	Same as Lower Risk Environment
<i>What if someone develops symptoms prior to or during our holiday gathering? (for significant symptoms, consult your physician)</i>	If you develop symptoms of COVID-19 within 10 days of or during your holiday gathering, do not attend and/or isolate from others UNLESS you have a negative PCR test while symptomatic, OR two (2) negative home COVID-19 tests, separated by at least 24 hours.	If you develop symptoms of COVID-19 within 10 days of or prior to or during your holiday gathering, do not attend and/or isolate from others UNLESS you have a negative PCR test.
<i>Should I get COVID-19 testing?</i>	Only if you have a recent close contact with someone with COVID-19, develop symptoms, or believe you may have COVID-19 (see next two items below).	Same as Lower Risk Environment
<i>What if I had a close contact with someone with COVID-19?</i>	Requirement to quarantine, test and/or mask varies based on your symptoms, vaccination status and prior COVID-19 infection history. Refer to most recent CDC guidelines: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html	Same as Lower Risk Environment
<i>What if I think or know I have COVID-19?</i>	Same as above.	Same as Lower Risk Environment
<i>How can I protect the more vulnerable individuals in my holiday bubble?</i>	No special precautions necessary.	For those considered at high risk of a bad outcome from COVID-19 (you identified these people in Step Two above), or for those who are unvaccinated, maintain masking and physical distancing of those individuals to the greatest extent practical.
<i>My children are not eligible to be vaccinated and will not wear a mask. How can I keep them safe?</i>	No special precautions necessary.	Although children tend to have less severe disease, they do contract and transmit the virus. Even mild disease can lead to rare but severe complications. This risk is more concerning in the setting of high levels of community disease. The best protection for your children is for all those in your holiday bubble who are eligible to receive the vaccine to be fully immunized.
<i>If I am getting people together for the holiday, how can I maximize the safety of our gathering?</i>	No special precautions necessary.	Pay attention to design of your holiday gathering. Emphasize outdoor activities wherever possible. If you must be indoors, do not overcrowd rooms. Weather permitting, open windows (turn up the heat if necessary) and use fans to promote ventilation. Maintain masking and distancing of vulnerable people, especially during mealtime.
<i>Is it OK to invite others to visit our bubble? Neighbors? Drop-in guests?</i>	If they meet the same criteria as your bubble, no special precautions necessary.	Limit your gathering to those who are part of your official Holiday Bubble, who understand and have agreed to follow these guidelines. Be particularly wary of admitting an unvaccinated “drop-in” guest to your bubble.
<i>What about community outings? Can we go out to a restaurant? Movie theater? Live sporting event?</i>	No special precautions necessary.	Use caution in community outings. Outdoor activities are safer but be cautious even out-of-doors if overly crowded. Avoid indoor restaurant dining; outdoor dining is relatively safe.