

SHOPPING AND HANDLING GROCERIES

Current evidence shows the biggest risk of transmission of COVID-19 is being around individuals who have symptoms (and to a lesser extent, infected but not showing symptoms.) Grocery stores should be following employee health policies and health department recommendations to keep these individuals home.

SHOPPING

WHAT STEPS CAN I TAKE TO MINIMIZE RISK WHEN SHOPPING AT THE GROCERY STORE



Use hand sanitizer when entering stores, and wash hands and/or use sanitizer after leaving.



Bring disinfecting wipes and use on cart and basket handles and card readers



Maintain social distancing as much as possible while shopping and give others at least 6ft of space.



Avoid touching surfaces or items unnecessarily and avoid touching your mouth, nose or face.



Do not go shopping when showing symptoms or think you have been exposed to the virus.

HOW SHOULD PRODUCE BE HANDLED?

- Consider using hand sanitizer before and after selecting produce items.
- Avoid touching multiple produce items when making selections.

WHAT IS MY GROCERY STORE DOING TO MINIMIZE MY RISK?

Many stores are following CDC guidelines on cleaning and disinfection. Some are limiting hours to allow for additional cleaning and disinfection.

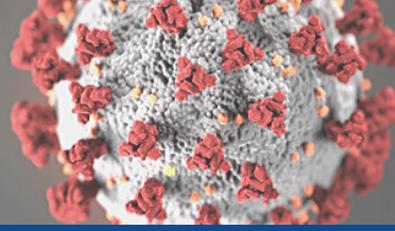
Stores may also be providing hand sanitizer and/or disinfecting wipes for carts or baskets, and may ask sick employees or customers to leave.

IS DELIVERY A SAFER OPTION THAN GOING TO THE STORE?

- Delivery or pre-order is a great risk management decision, especially for vulnerable individuals.
- Delivery helps limit the number of people in the store and helps with social distancing, as well as the number of people touching surfaces.
- Pre-order or delivery also prevents the shopper from inadvertently exposing others if they are infected but not showing symptoms
- Handling of food packaging and bags should be followed with handwashing and/or using hand sanitizer.

Source: North Carolina State University





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HANDLING GROCERIES

HOW SHOULD I HANDLE GROCERIES WHEN I GET HOME? CAN I BRING THEM INSIDE RIGHT AWAY?

- There is no indication that food or food packaging material has served in significant connection to virus transmission.
- Handling of food packaging should be followed with handwashing and/or using hand sanitizer.
- It is **NOT** recommended to store groceries outside of the home, in cars or garages.



SHOULD PRODUCE BE WASHED BEFORE EATING? SHOULD SOAP OR A DISINFECTANT BE USED?

- Washing produce before eating is always a good idea.
- It is **NOT** recommended to wash produce with dish soap or any detergent.
- It is **NOT** recommended to treat produce with chemical disinfectants at home.

HOW SHOULD I HANDLE GROCERIES FOR SOMEONE WHO IS IN A VULNERABLE POPULATION?

- If shopping for someone else, best practice is to drop off groceries while maintaining social distance.
- If entering a home to care for someone, wash hands immediately upon arrival, while unpacking and before providing direct care.

SHOULD I ONLY BUY FOOD THAT CAN BE HEATED?

- There is no evidence that food is a transmission route for the virus.
- There is not current data about the temperature to inactivate the virus, so heating recommendations are not science-based

TIPS

1. Use hand sanitizer and cart wipes.
2. shop alone and go with a plan.
3. Maintain social distancing.
4. Only touch what you will buy.



Source: North Carolina State University