

Be COVID Smart



Our communities have made encouraging progress in the fight against COVID-19, but we can't let our guard down now. The good news is, we know what works. Evidence and experience demonstrate how to control COVID-19 in our communities.

The Metro Denver Partnership for Health is highlighting the science-based steps we need to take to control COVID-19 and get life back to normal. We are making progress but are not out of the woods. COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations, including those from new variants, are surging again in western Europe, South America, and in states like Michigan and New Jersey.

Here are four keys to controlling the spread:



Get Vaccinated

Vaccination works very well, both to prevent disease and to decrease transmission. But we've only vaccinated less than half of the population.¹ Until case rates are lower, we need to continue masking and distancing in public places, as well as good hand washing. We need more data on vaccines and new viral variant strains. Certain variant strains appear to decrease, but not eliminate the protective effect of some vaccines.²



Mask Up

Masking remains one of the most effective measure to decrease transmission, comparable to vaccination.³ Keep your mask on while indoors in public places. You can remove your mask when outside, where there is less risk especially with adequate distance between you and others.



Socialize Smarter

Indoor gatherings remain a major risk for COVID-19 transmission, particularly when masks are not worn consistently, like when eating and drinking.⁴ Alcohol, marijuana, and other substances can also make it difficult to maintain the necessary vigilance. Keep indoor gatherings small and mask up if you're with people who aren't vaccinated yet.



School Safely

In-person learning from early childhood care centers through high school is feasible and safe with routine prevention measures including appropriate distancing, universal masking, ventilation, and handwashing.⁵

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Sources

- ¹Thompson MG, Burgess JL, Naleway AL, et al. Interim Estimates of Vaccine Effectiveness of BNT162b2 and mRNA-1273 COVID-19 Vaccines in Preventing SARS-CoV-2 Infection Among Health Care Personnel, First Responders, and Other Essential and Frontline Workers — Eight U.S. Locations, December 2020–March 2021. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep. ePub: 29 March 2021. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7013e3>
- ²Abdool Karim SS, de Oliveira T. New SARS-CoV-2 variants — clinical, public health, and vaccine implications. N Engl J Med. DOI: 10.1056/NEJMc2100362
- ³Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Science Brief: Community Use of Cloth Masks to Control the Spread of SARS-CoV-2. November 20, 2020. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/masking-science-sars-cov2.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fmore%2Fmasking-science-sars-cov2.html
- ⁴Fisher KA, Tenforde MW, Feldstein LR, et al. Community and Close Contact Exposures Associated with COVID-19 Among Symptomatic Adults ≥18 Years in 11 Outpatient Health Care Facilities — United States, July 2020. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2020;69:1258–1264. DOI: [http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6936a5external icon](http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6936a5external%20icon)
- ⁵Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools through Phased Prevention. March 19, 2021. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/operation-strategy.html>

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