

ADVICE FOR SAFE HOLIDAY ENTERTAINING

To protect ourselves, our loved ones and our communities, we must be mindful of the role we all play in helping to reduce the spread of COVID-19 during holidays.

COVID-19 is highly transmissible in social settings. One infected person could cause many people attending the same gathering to become ill. We urge you to be diligent, follow public health guidance, and have safe and happy holidays.

If you are hosting

- Consider virtual options or keep things small with your cohort – think about how many people the space can be accommodated safely.
- Ensure there is enough space for physical distancing between people from different cohorts.
- When deciding where to host, use the home or facility that offers the greatest space possible with the highest ceilings and best ventilation.
- Be clear about what your boundaries and expectations are with your guests ahead of time.
 - Ask guests what measures would make them feel more comfortable and do your best to accommodate.
- Try to limit contacts in the two weeks prior (especially if your plans include potentially being in close contact with guests with higher risk). Encourage your guests to do the same.
- Holiday planning can take a lot of time and effort. This makes changing plans if you feel sick even harder, but it is essential in order to keep your guests safe. Consider having a back up plan just in case.
 - Remind guests who are not feeling well to stay home. Ask all guests to complete the [Daily Symptom Checklist](#) prior to attending.
 - If you are feeling unwell (even if your symptoms are minor) cancel and make alternative arrangements.

- Be aware of [restrictions on gathering sizes](#) (including indoor and outdoors) in your community.
- Ensure proper ventilation with outside air to help reduce airborne contaminants. Keep windows open (weather permitting) to increase ventilation indoors.
- Ensure proper cleaning and disinfecting of high touch surfaces, shared items and dishes.
- Minimize physical contact between people.
- Wear a mask (when not eating or drinking) if you are going to be in close contact with people not in your household or cohort. Maintain the required physical distance as much as possible.
- Have hand sanitizer, hand soap and alcohol wipes available for guests to sanitize their hands at common touch points, and encourage its use by all prior to eating.
- Avoid last-minute shopping at peak times by planning ahead.

If you are travelling

- Stay up to date with developments related to COVID-19 in your own community and the community you plan on visiting.
- Be aware of local quarantine requirements and/or travel restrictions if travelling out of country or province.
- Limit your contacts in the two weeks prior to travel (especially if you will be spending time with people who are at higher risk).

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- Be symptom free for two weeks prior to travel. If you feel unwell stay home, even if your symptoms are minor.
- Ask those you are visiting what precautions they are taking, and if you are uncomfortable, do not go.
- If taking transportation with people from outside your household or cohort or taking public transport, wear a mask and sanitize your hands frequently. Try to travel during off-peak hours.
- Visit for shorter periods of time if and when possible. The less time you spend in close contact with other people, the less risk.

Activities

- Choose games and activities without shared items and where participants can maintain physical distance as much as possible.
- Follow available guidance for indoor singing and the use of musical instruments.
- Limit activities that require close contact between people from different households or cohorts.
- **Weather permitting, have** events outside to reduce the risk.
- Limit the time spent and the number of people indoors.

Meals

- Everyone should clean their hands before and after a meal.
- Set up separate seating areas for different groups at meal times.
 - Seat people who live in the same household or are in a cohort together.
 - Seat higher risk guests in places where they can have more distance from others, while still participating in the festivities.

- Have one person plate everyone's meals so people are not sharing serving utensils.
 - The person serving should wash or disinfect their hands before and after serving, and should wear a mask.
- Limit buffet or family-style serving to people who are in the same household or cohort.
- Consider having pre-portioned food, ordering take-out or asking guests to bring their own meals.

Visiting family members in care

- If you plan on visiting a family member who is in a continuing care or hospital setting, make sure you understand the facility's visitor policy. AHS facilities fall under the [Alberta Health Services' visitation policy](#).
- If you are feeling unwell, even with minor symptoms, you must not visit.
- Maintain physical distance from other visitors at all times unless you live in the same household.
- Contact the setting where your family member lives before your visit to make sure you understand the prevention measures they are taking.

Evaluating personal risk

- Keep up to date with information about COVID-19 transmission through the Government of Alberta website: <https://www.alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx>.
- You can learn more about the current state of your local area by looking at the [COVID-19 relaunch status map](#).
- In addition to evaluating transmission risk, Individuals can take a personal risk assessment to determine if they are more likely to experience severe outcomes if infected with COVID-19 using the [COVID-19 personal risk severity assessment](#).

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- It is important to remember that there will always be some risk associated with gatherings of any size.

Alternative Arrangements

- Hold virtual gatherings or virtual dinner parties.
- Move your visits outside (weather permitting).
 - Physical distancing is still required during outside events.
 - Have a BBQ or picnic lunch/dinner in your backyard or at a public picnic area. Please remember that all of the same guidelines for serving food indoors apply outdoors.