



Enjoying Summer Activities During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Always reference local/state health department and CDC guidelines regarding COVID-19 restrictions and/or recommendations in your area.



Walking/Running/Hiking: These are excellent activities for well-being and, when done by yourself or with members of your household, the contact intensity and number of contacts are very low. When performing these activities with individuals outside of your household, wear a face covering or maintain a social distance greater than 6 feet. If you walk, run, or hike too close behind someone who sneezes or coughs, you may come into contact with an aerosol cloud that contains the individual's respiratory droplets. Always carry hand sanitizer so you can clean your hands if you use a bathroom or touch surfaces. However, in groups it is difficult to modify behavior, so it is better to avoid group activities if possible – some of the major marathons have been canceled this year. Evaluate your risk by looking at your jurisdictional and neighboring jurisdictions data for disease intensity.



Going to the Gym/Sharing Gym Equipment: Gym activity carries medium to high risk for contact intensity and number of contacts. If going to a gym, make sure that you maintain social distancing and wear a face covering. While exercising, heavy breathing may spread infectious droplets farther than usual, so it is important to maintain a social distance greater than 6 feet. The gym should wipe equipment after each use. It is recommended you carry your own sanitizing wipes and clean the equipment before and after use to further reduce the risk of contamination. Additionally, bring your own water bottle and sweat towel to avoid excessive contact with shared surfaces. Doing these activities at home or outside is ideal and there are online programs that allow you to virtually participate in exercise classes with little or minimum equipment needed. Any indoor, group activity carries a higher risk of acquiring COVID-19.



Cycling/Motorcycling: Cycling or riding a motorcycle is safe as long as you wear a helmet and are riding alone or with members of your household. These activities are low risk, particularly if not done in a group and you do not congregate afterwards.



Playing Group or Contact Sports: These activities carry a high risk when it comes to contact intensity and number of contacts. It is best to perform these activities outdoors to reduce risk of contracting the disease. Contact sports such as basketball, football, soccer, baseball, and volleyball are high risk. R sports like tennis, badminton, pickleball, and ping-pong are safer alternatives if social distance is maintained and only two players are involved. The risk increases if you play doubles or with a larger group. Players should bring their own equipment and sanitizing wipes to clean any shared equipment. When standing on the sidelines be sure to maintain social distance and do not share water bottles or towels.



Visiting the Beach or Pool: Outdoor activities tend to have lower contact intensity although the potential exposure to numerous contacts could be high. If you plan to go to the beach, stay with those you are living with or who are in “your bubble” and avoid mingling with others. Set your beach blanket/umbrella at a safe distance from others – avoid crowded beaches. While at the beach, dining at an outdoor restaurant that observes social distancing and uses face coverings is a low risk activity. It is advised you keep your face covering on while you are basking in the sun or relaxing. Bring more than one face covering in case one gets wet or sandy. When using a public bathroom be mindful, wear your face covering and wash your hands. Carry hand sanitizer and use it frequently. Of course, while swimming without your face covering maintain social distancing – stay with your family or your group. Wear a face covering when leaving the beach or pool area, especially while walking on a boardwalk or engaging in other social activities.



Swimming: Swimming in any public pool carries both a medium contact intensity and exposure to the number of contacts. Depending on the intensity of the disease in your community the risk may increase. While in the pool, maintain as much social distance as possible. The more time you spend talking with someone, the greater your chance of exposure is – so if talking with an individual keep the interaction limited and maintain social distance. Wear a face covering anytime you are out of the water.



Hosting or Attending a Picnic/BBQ: Before planning a summer BBQ, you should take into consideration the COVID-19 intensity in your community and reference your local/state health department and CDC guidelines. Be cognizant of age, health status, and comfort level of your family and guests. If the data shows the disease count is not declining in your area, or you or someone you have regular contact with is sick - you should reconsider. You should also avoid gatherings if you are caring for, or living with, someone who is in a high-risk category.

The number of people at a gathering makes a difference in terms of your possible level of exposure. Follow state/local orders and keep gatherings small to reduce the risk. If you plan an activity involving food and drinks it must be conducted outside. Have guests go straight to the backyard and check the weather, if there is a chance of rain guests will want to move indoors.

When serving food, use dishes that are not shared – disposable plates and glassware. Avoid shared food items (e.g., dips, potato chips, vegetable platters) that guests will use or revisit. Food served directly from the grill is the safest as heat kills all viruses. Designate one person – wearing a face covering and disposable gloves - to serve food and another to serve the drinks to minimize potential spread and contact. Prepare individual plates and have guests pick them up one at a time to avoid crowding. Keep a garbage can close by for guests to discard all disposable items. Remember to frequently clean and wipe down indoor touch surfaces as the guests will most certainly use your bathroom.

Do not forget the following commonsense practices: maintain social distancing, wear a face covering, use hand sanitizer and frequently wash your hands, and place tables/chairs at least six feet apart. Have families sit together and don't allow mixing and no hugs please.



Canoeing/Kayaking: Canoeing or kayaking alone or with a member of your household is very safe as long as you wear a face covering before and after the activity. The chances of contacting others, provided you are not in a group, is also very low. The risk is the same as walking or jogging. Remember to carry hand sanitizer so you can use it when you encounter surfaces. If you are involved in a fishing or a water sport activity where larger boats and people are involved, you should wear a face covering. In case you are considering a group activity, such as white-water rafting, please use face coverings and do the activity with those you are living with or who are in "your bubble." Avoid large gatherings if possible.



Camping: When camping with those you live with the risk is low, and the potential contacts are low. If you plan to do this activity with a group of friends make sure you are all using face coverings, social distancing, and practicing good hand hygiene. Remember, group activities pose an increased risk and it further increases if multiple people who do not reside together are sharing a tent or cabin. The risk is the highest when a group of campers are not social distanced and are not from the same geographic area – each geographic area has a different disease intensity. Recommend enjoying this summer's camping with those you live with this year and if in a group stay in that group.

For each of these activities, it is important to consider the number of potential contacts, contact intensity, and the number of cases per capita in your community. Assess your personal health risk before participating in an activity and decide the safest way for you to enjoy the summer. We must work together in the fight against COVID-19 to keep our family, friends, and communities safe. Get creative and enjoy your summer outside – while still respecting social distancing and safety guidelines.

INSIGHTS BY

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