

The current risk of contracting COVID-19 in the U.S. and Canada varies by community. **It's critical that everyone does their part to limit the spread of the virus, as people without symptoms or with mild symptoms can still spread the virus to others, especially with emerging variants.**

How COVID-19 Spreads

COVID-19 is spread in three main ways:

- ▶ Breathing in air when in close proximity (less than six feet) for a prolonged period of time (15 cumulative minutes over a 24 hour period) to an infected person who is exhaling small droplets and particles that contain the virus, especially in enclosed spaces without good ventilation.
- ▶ Having these small droplets and particles that contain the virus land on the eyes, nose or mouth, especially through splashes and sprays like a cough or sneeze.
- ▶ Touching your eyes, nose or mouth with hands that have virus droplets or particles on them.

Protect Yourself from COVID-19

- ▶ **Stay up to date with your vaccines – this means getting fully vaccinated and getting a booster shot when it's available to you.** If you are up to date, you can more safely resume activities you did prior to the pandemic.
- ▶ Follow orders, guidance and recommendations from federal, state and local agencies.
- ▶ Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- ▶ Follow proper hygiene practices and respiratory etiquette.
- ▶ Avoid large crowds and poorly ventilated areas.
- ▶ Wear a facial covering in indoor public places.
- ▶ Practice social distancing by limiting person-to-person contact within six feet.
- ▶ If you are unvaccinated, weigh the importance vs. the risk of attending events in person instead of remotely.
- ▶ If you are unvaccinated, avoid non-essential travel on commercial airlines, trains and buses for work or personal use. When making travel plans, take into account the circumstances where you live, where you're going and the planned route.

Employers can also help protect workers from COVID-19 by:

Allowing workers with known exposure or who are sick to stay home or use available telework options without punitive measures such as loss of pay.

Symptoms, Exposure & Testing

- ▶ COVID-19 symptoms can include fever (100.4°F or greater) or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea.
- ▶ Some people never develop symptoms but are infected and can pass the disease to others. This is called asymptomatic spread.
- ▶ Some people who are vaccinated can still get infected. This is called a breakthrough infection.
 - People with a breakthrough infection who are up to date on their COVID-19 vaccinations are less likely to develop serious illness, require hospitalization or die from COVID-19 than people who are not.
 - People who get breakthrough infections can be contagious.
- ▶ **If you have a known or suspected exposure (regardless of vaccination status):**
 - Take precautions for 10 days after your last close contact with someone with COVID-19:
 - Monitor for symptoms.
 - If you develop symptoms, isolate immediately and get tested.
 - Even if you don't develop symptoms, get tested at least five days after close contact.
 - Wear a well-fitted mask around others inside your home or in public. Don't go places where you're unable to wear a mask.
 - Avoid travel.
 - Avoid being around people who are at high risk.

- If you are up to date on COVID-19 vaccines, you don't need to stay home and quarantine unless you develop symptoms.
- If you are **not** up to date on COVID-19 vaccines, stay home and quarantine for at least five days and wear a well-fitted mask if you must be around others in your home.
- ▶ If you test positive or have symptoms, regardless of vaccination status:
 - Stay home for at least five days and isolate from others in your home.
 - If you **did** have symptoms, end isolation when: at least five full days have passed since your positive test AND you are fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication) AND your symptoms are improving. Continue taking precautions listed above until day 10.
 - If you **did not** have symptoms, end isolation when: at least five full days have passed since your positive test. Continue taking precautions listed above until day 10.
 - Wear a well-fitted mask if you must be around others in your home.
 - Keep in contact with your healthcare provider.
 - Seek medical attention if your conditions worsen (e.g., difficulty breathing).

Groups at Risk for Getting Very Sick from COVID-19

- ▶ Older adults (age 65 and up)
- ▶ People with underlying health conditions (e.g., heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, cancer)
- ▶ People with weakened immune systems
- ▶ Not being up to date on your COVID-19 vaccinations

Additional Resources

Visit the Fund's Coronavirus & COVID-19 Resource page at www.lhsfna.org/index.cfm/coronavirus/. For specific questions not covered above, contact the Fund at 202-628-5465 or by email at communications@lhsfna.org

COVID-19 PROTECTION: DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SURGICAL MASKS, PAPER MASKS AND N95

Surgical Mask

Intended Use and Purpose
Provides a protective barrier against large droplets, splashes or sprays of bodily fluids. Protects others from the wearer's respiratory emissions.

Face Seal Fit
Loose-fitting

Fit-Testing Requirement
No

Filtration
Does **NOT** provide the wearer with a reliable level of protection from inhaling smaller airborne particles and is **NOT** considered respiratory protection.

Paper Mask

Intended Use and Purpose
Can be worn for comfort against non-toxic nuisance dusts during activities like mowing, sweeping and dusting. These masks are **NOT** respirators and do **NOT** offer protection against hazardous dusts, gases or vapors.

Face Seal Fit
Loose-fitting and many only have one strap.

Fit-Testing Requirement
No

Filtration
These masks are **NOT** NIOSH-approved disposable filtering facepieces. Does **NOT** provide the wearer with a reliable level of protection from inhaling smaller airborne particles and is **NOT** considered respiratory protection.

N95 Mask

Intended Use and Purpose
Reduces wearer's exposure to particles including small particle aerosols and large droplets (only non-oil aerosols).

Face Seal Fit
Tight-fitting

Fit-Testing Requirement
Yes

Filtration
Filters out at least 95% of airborne particles, including large and small particles. Provides the wearer with a reliable level of protection from inhaling smaller airborne particles and is considered respiratory protection.

Construction N95

Surgical N95

HAND WASHING 101

- 1 USE SOAP
- 2 PALM TO PALM
- 3 BACK TO HANDS
- 4 FINGERS INTERLACED
- 5 BASE OF THUMBS
- 6 FINGERNAILS
- 7 WRISTS
- 8 RINSE HANDS
- 9 DRY HANDS

WASH FOR AT LEAST 20 SECONDS.

LABORERS' HEALTH & SAFETY FUND OF NORTH AMERICA

THE POWER TO PROTECT