

BE A HERO!

BE A HERO! CELEBRATE SAFELY DURING COVID-19

It's natural to want to get together to celebrate the holidays and other important events. During the pandemic, we can still celebrate, but we need a little extra planning to keep everyone safe from COVID-19.

Plan SAFE holiday celebrations

Follow these basic guidelines to keep yourself, your family, and your friends safe during the holidays and other celebrations.

S: Share your risk, recent behaviors, and expectations with everyone who will participate.

A: Agree on a plan and rules to keep everyone safe.

F: Follow the rules you have agreed to.

E: Evaluate and adjust as needed.

This SAFE memory aid comes from <http://dearpandemic.org>.

If you travel:

- Take extra masks, hand sanitizer, and sanitizing wipes.
- Sanitize high-touch areas in hotel rooms.
- Bring your own food and basic supplies to limit stops and shopping trips.

And *always* make sure to wear a mask, keep your distance, and wash your hands often.

Consider the needs and concerns of others

When planning a celebration, think about the people who will participate. Be considerate of their concerns and their needs. Be open about the risks.

Understand that some people have a higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19. Some may work in high-risk places and may be more likely to be exposed to the disease. Others may live with people who are elderly or have other risk factors, and they may be concerned about bringing the virus home to them.

Don't pressure anyone to participate in an event they are not comfortable with.

Plan creatively and thoughtfully

Work with the other people who will participate to plan an event that will keep everyone safe. It may be a virtual event, a drive-in or drive-by event, an outdoor event, or a physically distanced event. Be open to a variety of options. Create a plan that everyone can agree on.



Virtual events are safest. Be creative to make them fun and special:

- video chat during a meal.
- email recipes in advance so that everyone can enjoy the same family favorites.
- share playlists of favorite holiday music or movies and share your comments and reactions by email, group text, video chat, or social media.
- video chat while everyone makes cookies or creates a craft together.

For in-person events, keep the group small. It's safest to limit the in-person celebration to just the people who live with you and to connect with other loved ones virtually.

If you must have a larger event, outdoor events are better than indoor events, because you are breathing fresh air and have more space to maintain distance.

Even outdoors, plan ways to help people maintain physical distance. Place tables of food or refreshments far apart to keep people from gathering. Offer single-serving food items whenever possible, not "buffet-style." Serve drinks in individual bottles or cans, not from pitchers or other shared sources. Use disposable plates and utensils.

Plan for people to come and go in "shifts," with staggered arrival and departure times. This way, you maintain a smaller number of people present at any one time.

Provide masks for people who don't have them, and put hand sanitizer at several different areas. Make sure that people keep their distance from others from different households.

If some guests cannot participate in an outdoor event, deliver a meal or refreshments to them in advance. Then video chat with them during the meal.



Follow the plan

Communicate the plan to everyone in advance. And make sure that everyone follows the plan. Be polite and kind but firm.

Keep lines of communication open. Make sure you can let everyone know if the plan changes because of weather or because a guest or host has been exposed to the virus.

Be flexible and relax

This year has been one of unpredictable changes and complications. Your plans may need to change, and that's okay. In fact, you may even be creating new traditions that your family and friends will treasure.

The important thing about celebrations is the human connection, thinking of other people, caring about other people. Even if you have to connect virtually or at a distance, the bond is still strong. And that's the tradition that really matters.

We may have smaller celebrations or different celebrations, but the important thing is to celebrate, however we can, with the people we care about.

Because that's what heroes do.

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