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20-06 (6)
20-07 (17)
20-08 (9)
20-09 (25)
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What You Can Do to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 During the Holidays

NCDHHS Communications [news@dhhs.nc.gov]

Sent: Friday, November 06, 2020 10:56 AM**To:** Steve Johnston[View this email in your browser.](#)

COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS) NC UPDATE

Nov. 6, 2020

Take Steps During the Holidays to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19

North Carolina's [COVID-19 trends](#) continue to move in the wrong direction and everyone must be vigilant to prevent the spread of the virus. As the holiday season approaches, NCDHHS wants to make sure you take steps to decrease the spread of COVID-19. While the safest thing you can do for your friends, family, and loved ones is to avoid getting together in person, there are steps you can take to reduce your risk if you attend or host a holiday gathering.

1. [Do not attend or host a gathering if you feel sick or have been diagnosed with or exposed to COVID-19.](#)
2. [Gathering limits of 25 people indoors and 50 people outdoors are still in place. Smaller gatherings pose less risk than larger gatherings and meeting outdoors is safer than meeting indoors. If you have tables, have each group of people who live together sit at their own table and keep tables at least 6 feet apart from one another. This is especially important as people will need to remove masks when eating or drinking. Clean and disinfect commonly-touched surfaces such as door handles or sink faucets.](#)
3. [Remember your 3 Ws \(Wear, Wait and Wash\). Wear a mask over your nose and mouth the whole time you are together – other than when eating or drinking. Wash your hands regularly or use hand sanitizer. And stay at least 6 feet apart, especially when eating or drinking.](#)
4. [Consider getting a COVID-19 test prior to travel or attending family gatherings. You can find testing sites by using the Find My Testing Place tool online. Screening tests are not perfect, but they can catch some people who have the virus and don't have symptoms yet. Screening tests can miss some infections – particularly if you use rapid tests. And, a negative test only gives you information for that point in time. A negative test does not mean you will remain negative.](#)

[Let's keep all of our family and friends safe this holiday season. Remember, it's not how well you know someone when it comes to wearing a mask. If they don't live with you, get behind the mask.](#)

[Download the SlowCOVIDNC App to Slow the Spread](#)



[More than 333,000 people have downloaded SlowCOVIDNC](#), the official exposure notification app of North Carolina, but the more people who download and use SlowCOVIDNC, the more we can slow the spread. SlowCOVIDNC alerts users when they may have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. The app relies on users to anonymously submit their positive result to notify others. So far, [more than 670 people have been notified of possible exposure to COVID-19 through SlowCOVIDNC](#).

The app is completely anonymous and does not collect, store or share personal information or location data. Download for free on the [Apple App Store](#) and the [Google Play Store](#). Learn more about the SlowCOVIDNC app in these [frequently asked questions](#), and share [resources and materials](#) about the app.

[Get Your Flu Vaccination](#)



Flu season is here, and it's just as important as ever to get your flu vaccine. The [CDC recommends flu vaccination](#) every year for everyone 6 months and older to prevent infection with the flu, and studies show that getting the flu vaccine protects the people around you who can get very sick from the flu, like older people, people with certain chronic health conditions, and even babies and young children.

So, this year, protect your family with the flu vaccine. Got it? Good. Learn more at [flu.nc.gov](#). To find a flu vaccine near you, visit [VaccineFinder.org](#).

[COVID-19 Guidance and Support Resources](#)

- As we move toward the holiday season, NCDHHS has developed [guidance](#) for the Thanksgiving Holiday, [guidance](#) for Black Friday shopping, [guidance](#) for fall-related events ([English](#), [Spanish](#)), [guidance](#) for safer holiday breaks for college students, as well as full guidance for private social gatherings ([English](#), [Spanish](#)) and an at-a-glance version ([English](#), [Spanish](#)).
- NCDHHS is [partnering](#) with four Latin American sports figures to increase awareness of the importance of wearing a mask to slow the spread of COVID-19.
- Primary care providers can now [request reimbursement](#) for COVID-19 costs for

individuals without health insurance through a [new online portal](#).

- NCDHHS' Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing recently [produced an American Sign Language \(ASL\) video](#) about NC remaining paused in Phase 3. The video includes closed captioning, a voice over and a transcription.
- The [Housing Opportunities and Prevention of Evictions \(HOPE\)](#) Program continues to [accept applications](#) for rent and/or utility assistance for renters who are experiencing financial hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- According to [Feeding America](#), the increase in the number of people turning to food banks for help nationwide is 60% or more on average. To donate to a food bank near you, visit the [Feeding the Carolinas website](#).

COVID-19 Testing

Anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19 should get [tested](#). If you are sick, use the [Check My Symptoms](#) tool to help you determine if you need a COVID-19 test. People who do not currently have symptoms but may have been exposed to COVID-19 should also get tested.

North Carolina has upcoming community testing events scheduled in **Alamance, Beaufort, Bladen, Buncombe, Caswell, Chatham, Chowan, Cumberland, Duplin, Durham, Edgecombe, Forsyth, Gaston, Gates, Graham, Greene, Guilford, Harnett, Henderson, Hoke, Iredell, Jackson, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, Montgomery, New Hanover, Onslow, Orange, Pitt, Randolph, Richmond, Rockingham, Stanly, Swain, Wake, Watauga and Yadkin counties**. For an up-to-date list of events, visit the [Community Testing Events](#) webpage. Many events offer testing at no cost. For more details about a specific event, call ahead before you go for a test.

COVID-19 testing is also provided at some local health departments, doctor and clinician offices, hospitals and clinics, many pharmacy sites and retail outlets, and other community locations. You can find testing sites by using the [Find My Testing Place](#) tool online.

Get the Latest Information

- Visit the [NCDHHS COVID-19 Response website](#) for information, a [data dashboard](#), [updates](#), [live briefings](#) and more.
- Go to [North Carolina's COVID-19 Information Hub](#) for resources, information and assistance across state government, including the latest [news releases](#).
- Follow NCDHHS on [social media](#) for advance notice of press briefings and a recap.



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