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Supplies, Services, Solutions

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Date: March 01, 2024

To: **All Employees**

From: Diana Gerhardt

RE: Guidance for: **Covid-19 and other respiratory viruses**

Our company has adopted the CDC guidelines as policy, so it is important that every employee continues to familiarize themselves with the most recent guidelines to keep everyone safe from respiratory illnesses such as Covid-19, Flu, and RSV.

If you are experiencing cold, flu or any type of respiratory symptoms, you should test for Covid-19 prior to coming to work. Knowing when to test is crucial to ensure you are receiving accurate results. Please refer to the CDC Covid-19 Protocol as of March 01, 2024, located on our ADP portal under Company News and Announcements.

The updated respiratory virus guidance recommends that people **stay home and away from others until at least 24 hours after both their symptoms are getting better overall, and they have not had a fever for 24 hours (and are not using fever-reducing medication)**. The guidance encourages added precaution over the **next five days** after time at home, away from others, is over. Since some people remain contagious beyond the “stay-at-home” period, a period of added precaution using prevention strategies, such as: ***taking more steps for cleaner air, enhancing hygiene practices, wearing a well-fitting mask, keeping a distance from others and/or getting tested for respiratory viruses can lower the chance of spreading respiratory viruses to others.***

If you are a New York employee, you may be eligible for Covid pay. To receive Covid pay, you must produce a positive result, either administered at a facility or an at home test. If you test positive while using an at home test, we ask that you take a picture after writing your name and the date on a piece of paper and placing the test stick on top. If you have symptoms but test negative on a rapid test, you should contact me (all locations other than upstate New York) or Kris (upstate New York locations) to determine whether you should come to work. In all cases, Kris or I must be notified immediately by either the individual or their direct supervisor of Covid symptoms.

**Reminder, you should never come to work with a fever, regardless of testing negative for Covid.**

Periodically, the federal government administers free Covid-19 testing kits, you may check their website at <https://www.covid.gov/tests> for availability.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Kris or me.

Stay safe, Diana



# CDC updates and simplifies respiratory virus recommendations

Recommendations are easier to follow and help protect those most at risk

## Press Release

For Immediate Release: Friday, March 1, 2024

Contact: [Media Relations](#)

(404) 639-3286

CDC released today [updated recommendations](#) for how people can protect themselves and their communities from respiratory viruses, including COVID-19. The new guidance brings a unified approach to addressing risks from a range of common respiratory viral illnesses, such as COVID-19, flu, and RSV, which can cause significant health impacts and strain on hospitals and health care workers. CDC is making updates to the recommendations now because the U.S. is seeing far fewer hospitalizations and deaths associated with COVID-19 and because we have more tools than ever to combat flu, COVID, and RSV.

“Today’s announcement reflects the progress we have made in protecting against severe illness from COVID-19,” said CDC Director Dr. Mandy Cohen. “However, we still must use the commonsense solutions we know work to protect ourselves and others from serious illness from respiratory viruses—this includes vaccination, treatment, and staying home when we get sick.”

As part of the guidance, CDC provides active recommendations on core prevention steps and strategies:

- **Staying up to date with vaccination** to protect people against serious illness, hospitalization, and death. This includes flu, COVID-19, and RSV if eligible.
- **Practicing good hygiene** by covering coughs and sneezes, washing or sanitizing hands often, and cleaning frequently touched surfaces.
- **Taking steps for cleaner air**, such as bringing in more fresh outside air, purifying indoor air, or gathering outdoors.

When people get sick with a respiratory virus, the updated guidance recommends that they stay home and away from others. For people with COVID-19 and influenza, treatment is available and can lessen symptoms and lower the risk of severe illness. The recommendations suggest returning to normal activities when, for at least 24 hours, symptoms are improving overall, and if a fever was present, it has been gone without use of a fever-reducing medication.

Once people resume normal activities, they are encouraged to take additional prevention strategies for the next 5 days to curb disease spread, such as taking more steps for cleaner air, enhancing hygiene practices, wearing a well-fitting mask, keeping a distance from others, and/or getting tested for respiratory viruses. Enhanced precautions are especially important to protect those most at risk for severe illness, including those over 65 and people with weakened immune systems. CDC’s updated guidance reflects how the [circumstances](#) around [COVID-19 in particular have changed](#). While it remains a threat, today it is far less likely to cause severe illness because of widespread immunity and improved tools to prevent and treat the disease. Importantly, states and countries that have already adjusted recommended isolation times have not seen increased hospitalizations or deaths related to COVID-19.

While every respiratory virus does not act the same, adopting a unified approach to limiting disease spread makes recommendations easier to follow and thus more likely to be adopted and does not rely on individuals to test for illness, a practice that data indicates is uneven.

“The bottom line is that when people follow these actionable recommendations to avoid getting sick, and to protect themselves and others if they do get sick, it will help limit the spread of respiratory viruses, and that will mean fewer people who experience severe illness,” National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases Director Dr. Demetre Daskalakis said. “That includes taking enhanced precautions that can help protect people who are at higher risk for getting seriously ill.”

The updated guidance also includes specific sections with additional considerations for people who are at higher risk of severe illness from respiratory viruses, including people who are immunocompromised, people with disabilities, people who are or were recently pregnant, young children, and older adults. Respiratory viruses remain a public health threat. CDC will continue to focus efforts on ensuring the public has the information and tools to lower their risk of respiratory illness by protecting themselves, families, and communities.

This updated guidance is intended for community settings. There are no changes to respiratory virus guidance for healthcare settings.

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[U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES](#) 

*Whether diseases start at home or abroad, are curable or preventable, chronic or acute, or from human activity or deliberate attack, CDC's world-leading experts protect lives and livelihoods, national security and the U.S. economy by providing timely, commonsense information, and rapidly identifying and responding to diseases, including outbreaks and illnesses. CDC drives science, public health research, and data innovation in communities across the country by investing in local initiatives to protect everyone's health.*

Last Reviewed: March 1, 2024