



Keep your community healthy this holiday season: Suggested talking points

- **If you still haven't received an updated COVID-19 vaccine and flu shot, schedule an appointment now at [Vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov).**
 - The updated COVID-19 vaccine [targets the Omicron subvariant XBB.1.5](#) and may also protect us against newer, currently circulating variants. This season's flu vaccine [protects us against currently circulating flu strains](#).
 - Getting this season's updated COVID-19 and flu vaccines reduces your risk of related hospitalization and death.
 - The CDC recommends [the updated COVID-19 vaccine](#) and [the flu vaccine](#) for everyone 6 months and older. The [RSV vaccine](#) is recommended for pregnant people and people 60 and older.
- **Wear a high-quality, well-fitting mask when you travel.**
 - Masks protect us from all kinds of viruses, including COVID-19, the flu, and RSV.
 - The CDC [recommends masking](#) indoors on planes, trains, buses, and boats, as well as at transportation hubs since we're likely to encounter germs in crowded spaces.
 - N95 and KN95 masks offer the best protection since they filter out at least [95 percent of infectious particles](#) when they fit properly.
- **If you're hosting a gathering, [improve ventilation](#) in your household.**
 - Open windows and doors to increase airflow and reduce the spread of airborne respiratory viruses.
 - Consider investing in high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters, which clean the air by efficiently removing [more than 99 percent of particles](#).
 - If HEPA filters are outside of your budget, you can [build your own Corsi-Rosenthal box](#), which can capture about 85 percent of infectious particles.



Keep your community healthy this holiday season: Frequently asked questions

1. Is it too late to get vaccinated before the holidays?

No. It typically takes your body around two weeks after receiving a vaccine to develop a full immune response, but your immune system may see some benefit within days of your vaccination. Visit [Vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) to schedule your updated COVID-19 vaccine, flu shot, and RSV vaccine (if you're eligible) as soon as possible.

[According to the CDC](#), it's safe to get your updated COVID-19 vaccine and annual flu vaccine at the same time. Adults 60 and older who are eligible for the RSV vaccine can safely get their COVID-19, flu, and RSV vaccines [at the same time](#).

2. How can COVID-19 rapid tests help protect against the virus?

COVID-19 rapid tests are a low-cost, efficient way to test for COVID-19 at home, and they're available for purchase at most pharmacies. You can also order four free COVID-19 rapid tests online at [COVID.gov/tests](https://www.covid.gov/tests). The CDC says positive rapid test results are very accurate and reliable. However, a negative test result [does not rule out infection](#). Rapid tests are less likely to detect a COVID-19 infection than a PCR test from your health care provider, especially if you don't have symptoms.

Encouraging guests to take COVID-19 rapid tests before a holiday gathering is an additional way to protect your guests and yourself against COVID-19, but this method is best used alongside other layers of protection.

3. What should I do if I get sick before the holidays?

If you get sick before the holidays, avoid traveling to avoid spreading the virus. Wear a well-fitting N95 or KN95 mask around others, especially babies, older adults, and immunocompromised people, who may be more vulnerable to infection. See a health care provider who can test you for COVID-19, the flu, and RSV and prescribe appropriate treatment. Remember that even if you take a COVID-19 rapid test at home and get a negative result, you may still have COVID-19 and [be contagious](#).