



## Don't get sick this season: Suggested talking points

- **Breathing cold air reduces our noses' ability to fight off viruses.**
  - [A 2022 study](#) found that reducing the temperature inside the nose by as little as 9 degrees Fahrenheit kills nearly half of the virus-fighting cells in our nostrils.
  - In addition to protecting you from inhaling viral particles, wearing a mask over your nose and mouth can prevent you from breathing in the cold winter air, keeping your nose warm and [protecting your virus-fighting cells](#).
  - Keeping your home warm and humid can protect your nose's virus-fighting cells.
- **Indoor heating dries out the air, allowing viruses to spread more easily.**
  - When indoor air is dry, there are fewer water molecules available to slow down particles expelled through coughing and sneezing.
  - [Using humidifiers indoors](#) during colder months may reduce the spread of respiratory viruses.
  - Improving indoor ventilation by opening doors and windows, investing in high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters, or [building your own Corsi-Rosenthal box](#) can also reduce the spread of airborne respiratory viruses indoors.
- **During the holiday season, we spend more time gathering indoors, giving our bodies more opportunities to encounter germs.**
  - If you still haven't received an updated COVID-19 vaccine, flu shot, and RSV vaccine (if you're eligible), schedule an appointment today at [Vaccines.gov](#).
  - Wearing a high-quality, well-fitting mask indoors protects you from all kinds of viruses, including COVID-19, the flu, and RSV.
  - The CDC says washing your hands regularly can prevent [one in five respiratory infections](#).



## Don't get sick this season: Frequently asked questions

### 1. How can I bolster my immune system this winter?

Staying up to date on vaccinations is a safe and effective way to improve our immune response to viruses. The CDC recommends the updated COVID-19 vaccine and this season's flu vaccine [for everyone 6 months and older](#). The CDC also recommends the [RSV vaccine](#) for people who are 32 to 36 weeks' pregnant and people 60 and older. Visit [Vaccines.gov](#) to schedule your updated COVID-19 vaccine, flu shot, and RSV vaccine (if you're eligible) as soon as possible.

In addition to protecting you from inhaling viral particles, wearing a mask over your nose and mouth may also improve your immune response. Keeping your nose warm protects the virus-fighting cells in your nostrils from dying off in cold temperatures. Learn more about masks [from the CDC](#).

### 2. How can I reduce the spread of respiratory viruses at indoor gatherings?

Masking at indoor gatherings and encouraging guests to wear masks in public settings prior to an indoor gathering can reduce the spread of respiratory viruses.

Improving indoor ventilation by opening doors and windows, using high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters, and [building your own Corsi-Rosenthal box](#) can also reduce viral spread. Humidifiers may also protect you and your guests against germs since viruses don't spread as easily through moist air.

Encouraging [hand-washing](#) and regularly sanitizing shared surfaces can prevent you and your guests from spreading germs through touch.

### 3. What should I do if I have respiratory virus symptoms?

If you develop a cough, runny nose, or fever, see a health care provider who can test you for COVID-19, the flu, and RSV and prescribe the 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](#).

Wash your hands frequently and wear a well-fitting N95 or KN95 mask around others, especially babies, older adults, and immunocompromised people, who may be more vulnerable to infection. Avoid traveling while you're sick to avoid spreading the virus.