

Preventing COVID-19: Tips for Large Households or Extended Families Living in the Same Space

If you have few rooms for a group of people, there are ways to protect yourself and the people living in your household. These tips are in addition to basic prevention advice, guidance for isolation, and what to do if someone is sick. Read [Help Keep Illness from Spreading](#), [How to self-isolate for COVID-19](#), and more at healthvermont.gov/covid19-resources.



Protect the household

Act as if you are as much at risk as the most vulnerable person in your home. People who are 65 years or older are at high risk of getting a more severe illness if infected with COVID-19. People who are any age and have health problems are also at higher risk.

- Stay home as much as possible.
- Follow prevention advice. Read [Help Keep Illness from Spreading](#).
- Do not have visitors come to your home unless they need to be there.
- Stay physically distant from members of your home who are at high risk.
- People at high risk should avoid taking care of children.

If you need to go outside of the house:

- Stay 6 feet (2 meters) from people who do not live in your house.
- Avoid crowds and social gatherings.
- Wear a cloth mask. Read [Using Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19](#).
- Avoid public transportation or riding in a car with people from a different household.
- Don't touch frequently touched surfaces in public areas, like elevator buttons or handrails.
- If you need to touch surfaces in public areas, avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth, and wash your hands or use hand sanitizer right after.
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home.

When a household member is sick with COVID-19

Most people sick from COVID-19 will have only a mild illness and should stay at home, apart from others, to recover. Call your health care provider if you have any concerns. Read [What to do if you are diagnosed with COVID-19](#).

Prevent the spread of the virus to other people in the house:

- Keep a distance of 6 feet (2 meters) between the person who is sick and other people of the household, especially those people at higher risk.

- Only one person should take care of the person who is sick.
 - The caregiver should not be someone who is high risk (65 years or older or anyone with a health problem).
 - The caregiver should limit contact with other people in the household.
 - The caregiver should not take care of other members of the household.
- The person who is sick should wear a cloth face covering any time they are around people, unless they have trouble breathing or cannot remove the face covering on their own.
- Don't share personal items with the sick person, like phones, dishes, bedding or toys.
- Provide a separate room and bathroom for a person who is sick if possible.

If you must share a room with someone who is sick:

- Make sure the room has good air flow. Open a window or run a fan.
- Make a separate space for the person who is sick that is as far from the other people in the room as possible.
- Put a curtain or other physical divider between the sick person's space and the rest of the room.
- Place the beds as far apart as possible, at least 6 feet (2 meters).
- Sleep head to toe: when laying down, one person's head is facing the same direction as the other person's feet.

If you must share a bathroom with someone who is sick:

- Ask the sick person to clean and disinfect surfaces, doorknobs, and handles as they leave the bathroom. If they are not well enough to clean up, the caregiver should disinfect the commonly used areas.
- Other people in the home should wait as long as possible before using the bathroom after a sick person used it. They should also clean high touch areas before they use them.

Mealtimes

- Only people who are not sick should prepare food, set place settings, and serve food, after they wash their hands.
- Make a plate for the sick person to eat in another room. If this is not possible, they should stay 6 feet (2 meters) apart from the rest of the household members.
- The caregiver of the sick person should be the only person who serves them their meals and clears and washes their dishes.
- The person who is sick should not share dishes with anyone else. The caregiver should wear gloves to handle those dishes, glasses, and utensils, if possible.
- Wash your hands after handling dishes, glasses and utensils.

For more information, visit www.healthvermont.gov/covid19-resources