

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

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Know When to Delay your Travel to Avoid Spreading COVID-19

Updated Oct. 21, 2020



People who are sick, have recently tested positive for the virus that causes COVID-19, or have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 pose a risk to others during travel. This page gives advice on when and how long people should delay their domestic or international travel to avoid spreading infection.

- Don't travel if you or any of your travel companions
 - Are sick
 - Have suspected or diagnosed COVID-19 (even if you don't have symptoms)
 - Have been around someone with suspected or diagnosed COVID-19 in the past 14 days (even if they did not have symptoms).
- CDC can [restrict the travel](#) of people known or believed to have COVID-19, or who have been exposed to a person with COVID-19, if they plan to travel. State, local, and territorial health departments and foreign public health authorities can also restrict travel of infected or exposed people within their jurisdictions.
- Getting [trip cancellation insurance](#) might help ensure you are able to make a last-minute cancellation or change your itinerary without losing money on flights, cruises, train tickets, or pre-paid lodgings.
- For all travel, take preventive measures to [protect yourself and others](#), such as wearing a [face mask](#) for the duration of your trip, especially if using [public transportation](#).

When to Delay your Travel

The COVID-19 pandemic may be stressful for people. Traveling with family or friends can be a stress reliever, but it also increases your chances of getting and spreading COVID-19. You don't want to miss out on a planned trip, but there are situations when cancelling or postponing travel makes sense for you and those you care about. Delaying your trip when you could spread COVID-19 also protects other travelers, people who work in travel settings, and those at your destination.

Check these common scenarios to see if you or your travel companions should delay your travel. This list does not include all possible situations. Talk to your health care provider before you travel if you are unsure whether any of these situations apply to you or your travel companions. CDC will continue to update this information as we learn more about COVID-19.

[Accessible content below image](#)Print-ready  [PDF – 1 page]

Accessible version: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/when-to-delay-travel.html>

Delay your travel if you...



Are sick with a fever, cough or other symptoms of COVID-19

- Don't travel or cross borders while sick. Stay home and isolate.
- If you need to travel for medical care, travel by ambulance, air ambulance, or private vehicle.

Have recently tested positive for COVID-19 with a viral test

- Don't travel while infectious with COVID-19 even if you don't have symptoms. Stay home and isolate.
- If you need to travel for medical care, travel by ambulance, air ambulance, or private vehicle.



Have had close contact with a person with COVID-19 in the past 14 days

- Delay your travel and quarantine by separating yourself from others until 14 days after your last exposure.



Are waiting for results of a COVID-19 viral test

- Delay your travel until you get your test results.
- If your test comes back positive while you're at your destination
 - » You will need to isolate yourself from others and delay your return.
 - » Your travel companions will need to self-quarantine and delay their travel back home until 14 days after their last exposure to you while you have COVID-19.



For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/when-to-delay-travel.html>

[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

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Alternative Format

Scenario 1: Are you or your travel companions sick with fever, cough, or other symptoms of COVID-19?

Sick with fever, cough, or other symptoms of COVID-19

Don't travel or cross borders while sick. Stay home and [isolate yourself from others](#) until it's [safe for you to end home isolation](#).

If you need to travel to get medical care, the safest way to travel is by ambulance, air ambulance, or private vehicle. If you use [paratransit services](#), call ahead to notify the service of your illness so they can take precautions to protect the driver and other staff; no other passengers should share the vehicle. Wear a [mask](#) while around others. Don't travel on commercial vehicles (bus, taxi, rideshare), trains, airplanes, ships, or boats while sick.

If you test negative for COVID-19 but you are still sick, delay your travel until you're well – other contagious diseases can spread through travel too. If you have a fever (feel feverish or have a temperature of 100.4°F [38°C] or higher), wait at least 24 hours after your fever is gone without using fever-reducing medications.

If you test positive for COVID-19, see Scenario 2.

Scenario 2: Have you or your travel companions recently tested positive for COVID-19 with a viral test?

Recently tested positive for COVID-19 with a [viral test](#)

Don't travel while infectious with COVID-19 even if you don't have symptoms. Stay home and [isolate yourself from others](#). Delay your travel until it's [safe for you to end home isolation](#).

If you need to travel to get medical care, the safest way to travel is by ambulance, air ambulance, or private vehicle. If you use [paratransit services](#), call ahead to notify the service of your positive test so that they can take precautions to protect the driver and other staff; no other passengers should share the vehicle. Wear a [mask](#) while around others. Don't travel on commercial vehicles (bus, taxi, rideshare), trains, airplanes, ships or boats if you have (or think you may have) COVID-19.

Scenario 3: Did you or your travel companions have close contact with a person with COVID-19 in the past 14 days?

[Close contact](#) with a person with COVID-19 in the past 14 days*

*People who have had COVID-19 within the past 3 months do not need to self-quarantine, unless they have new [symptoms](#) of COVID-19.

Delay your travel and [quarantine by separating yourself from others](#) until 14 days after your last exposure.

During your quarantine period

- If you get sick, [isolate yourself from others](#), get tested for COVID-19, and delay your travel until it's [safe for you to end home isolation](#).
- If you need to travel to get medical care, the safest way to travel is by ambulance, air ambulance, or private vehicle. If you use [paratransit services](#), call ahead to notify the service of your close contact with a person with COVID-19 (and your illness, if you are sick) so that they can take precautions to protect the driver and other staff; no other passengers should share the vehicle. Wear a [mask](#) while around others. Don't travel on commercial vehicles (bus, taxi, rideshare), trains, airplanes, ships or boats if you have (or think you may have) COVID-19.
- If you test positive for COVID-19, see Scenario 2.

- If you test negative for COVID-19, you should still finish your 14-day quarantine period before traveling.

Scenario 4: Are you or your travel companions waiting for a COVID-19 viral test result?

Waiting for a COVID-19 **viral test** result

- A viral test checks for current infection.
- Delay your travel until you get your test results.
- If you test positive for COVID-19, see Scenario 2.
- If you test negative for COVID-19, check Scenarios 1 and 3 to make sure you don't have another reason to delay your travel.
- If you happen to travel before you get your results, and your test comes back positive while you're at your destination
- You will need to **isolate yourself from others**, including your travel companions, and delay your return until it's **safe for you to end home isolation**.
 - Your travel companions will need to **self-quarantine** and delay their travel back home until 14 days after their last exposure to you while you have COVID-19. Their 14 days will start after you start to self-isolate from them. If you don't self-isolate from your travel companions, their 14 days will start after you have recovered from COVID-19.
 - If you or your travel companions make plans to travel before it's safe, public health authorities can **restrict** your travel.

Scenario 5: Are you or your travel companions waiting for a COVID-19 antibody test result?

Waiting for a COVID-19 **antibody test** (blood test) result

- An antibody test checks for a past infection. To see if you are currently infected, you need a **viral test**.
- Waiting for an antibody test by itself is not a reason to delay travel because the result (whether positive or negative) doesn't tell you if you currently have COVID-19. However, check Scenarios 1-4 to make sure you don't have another reason to delay your travel.

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