

Respiratory Virus Guide (including, COVID-19, Influenza, and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV))

Last Updated 3.6.24

This document provides the latest guidance on COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses. For the most recent weekly reports on COVID-19 in DeKalb County, please visit DeKalb Public Health's [report](#).

What Can I Do to Prevent Respiratory Virus Illness?

Follow Vaccine Guidelines

COVID-19

Stay up-to-date with your COVID-19 vaccine for protection against COVID-19. CDC recommends:

Age Group	Number of Doses
6 months–4 years old	2-3 doses depending on which vaccine they receive
5 years and older	1 dose of the updated COVID-19 vaccine

To see your recommended number of vaccine doses and schedule, [click here for CDC's COVID-19 vaccine page](#).

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)

Age Group	Number of Doses
Infants (Birth–6 months)	<p>Either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● One dose of maternal RSV vaccination, or● One dose of infant immunization <p>Ask your doctor to see if the RSV vaccine is right for you or your child.</p>
60 years and older	<p>One dose of RSV vaccine after a discussion with your healthcare provider.</p> <p>The best time to get vaccinated is in late summer and early fall – just before RSV usually starts to spread in the community.</p>

To learn more about your vaccine recommendation, click [here](#).

Influenza

Stay up-to-date with your Influenza vaccine for protection against Influenza. CDC recommends:

Age Group	Number of Doses
6 months–8 years old	<p>Those who have received fewer than two influenza vaccine doses before July 1, 2023:</p> <p>Two doses, separated by at least 4 weeks</p> <p>Those who have received at least two influenza vaccine doses before July 1, 2023:</p> <p>One dose</p>
9 years–65 years old	One dose of any influenza vaccine
65 years and older	<p>One dose of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Quadrivalent high-dose inactivated influenza vaccine (HD-IIV4)● Quadrivalent recombinant influenza vaccine (RIV4), or● Quadrivalent adjuvanted inactivated influenza vaccine (aIIV4) is preferred. <p>If none of these three vaccines are available, then any other age-appropriate influenza vaccine should be used.</p>

To learn more about your vaccine recommendation, click [here](#).

Take Everyday Preventive Actions



Frequently wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based sanitizer.



Cover sneezes and coughs with an elbow or tissue. If you use a tissue, throw it away.



Follow mask guidance. Be sure you're wearing a mask properly (cover nose and mouth), especially indoors around others.



Avoid close contact with sick individuals.

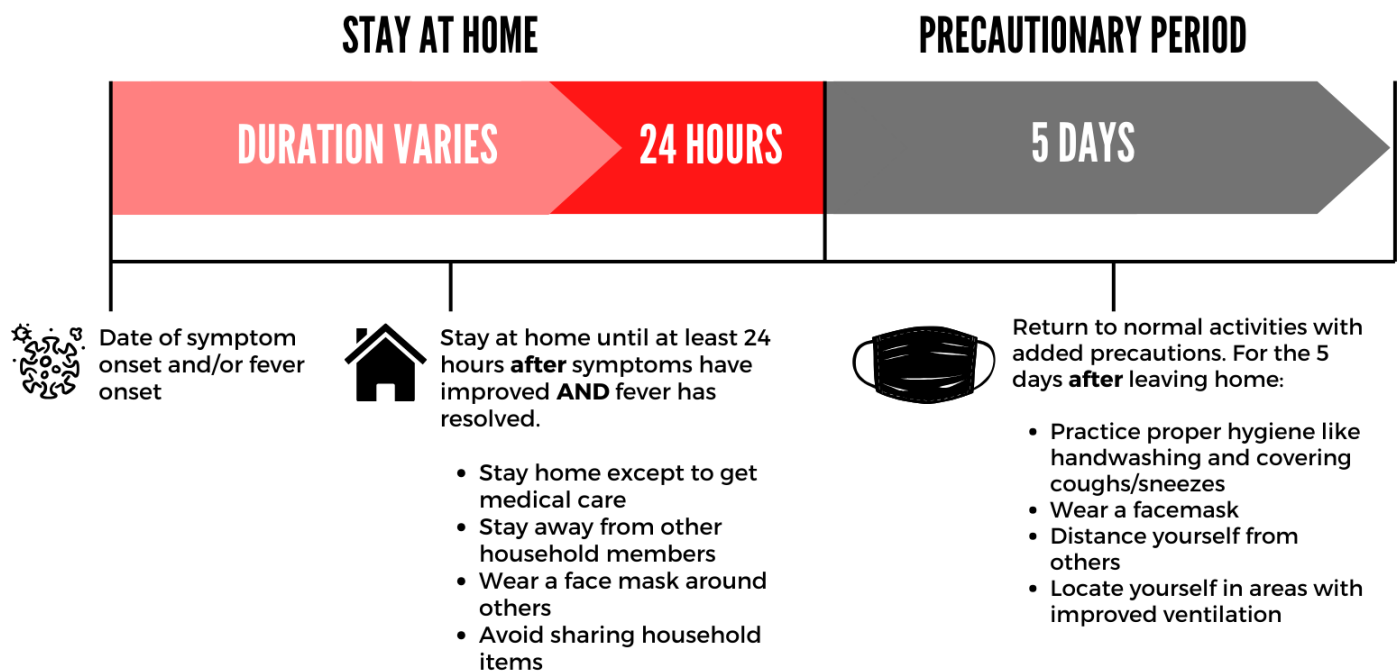
Increase Space and Distance

Putting physical distance between yourself and others can help lower the risk of spreading a respiratory virus. There is no single number that defines a “safe” distance, since spread of viruses can depend on many factors.

The closer you are to a large number of people, the more likely you are to be exposed to a respiratory illness. To avoid possible exposure, **avoid crowded areas or keep distance between yourself and others.**

You are also less likely to be infected with a respiratory virus during outdoor activities because virus particles do not build up in the air outdoors as much as they do indoors. **Consider moving group activities outside** when the weather permits. For more information on how to protect yourself and others, visit the CDC website [here](#).

What If I Have Respiratory Symptoms or Fever?



When to Stay Home:

You should stay home from work, school, and other activities and stay away from others if you are sick and suspect you have a respiratory virus but do not have test results yet or if you test positive for a respiratory virus.

- If you **have** symptoms:
 - Stay at home until 24 hours **after** your symptoms have improved **and/or** your fever has resolved.
- If you test **negative**:
 - If you are experiencing symptoms, you should stay home until your symptoms have improved.

If you test positive but don't have symptoms:

- You may be contagious. For the next 5 days: take added precaution, such as taking additional steps for cleaner air, hygiene, masks, physical distancing, and/or testing when you will be around other people indoors.
- This is especially important to protect people with factors that increase their risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

Steps Individuals Can Take While Sick:

- **Separate yourself from others at home for until 24 hours after your fever has resolved, without the use of fever-reducing medications** to avoid spreading your illness to those you live with. Stay in a separate bedroom and use a separate bathroom, if possible.
- **Separate yourself from others at home for until 24 hours after your symptoms have resolved** to avoid spreading your illness to those you live with. Stay in a separate bedroom and use a separate bathroom, if possible.
- **Wear a high-quality mask** if you do need to be around others.
- **Avoid places** (like restaurants and gyms) **and gatherings** (like parties), especially where you are **unable to mask**. Instead, join with others via video or phone call.
- **Avoid eating around others.**
- **Avoid traveling.**
- **Cover sneezes and coughs** with an elbow or tissue. If you use a tissue, throw it away.
- **Frequently wash your hands** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based sanitizer.
- **Frequently disinfect high-touch surfaces**, such as doorknobs.
- **Don't share cups and utensils.**
- **Monitor your symptoms.** If you have any emergency warning signs, such as trouble breathing, seek emergency medical attention immediately.

Ending Your Stay at Home Period:

If you had symptoms:

- You may leave home when:
 - Your symptoms have improved, **and**
 - You haven't had a fever in the past 24 hours without using fever-reducing medication.
- Note: If you don't meet **both** of the above criteria, continue your isolation until you do meet them.

Precautionary Period - 5 Days After Leaving Home:

- When you go back to your normal activities, take added precaution over the next 5 days, such as taking additional steps for cleaner air, hygiene, masks, physical distancing, and/or testing when you will be around other people indoors.
 - Keep in mind that you may still be able to spread the virus that made you sick, even if you are feeling better. You are likely to be less contagious at this time, depending on factors like how long you were sick or how sick you were.
 - If you develop a fever or you start to feel worse after you have gone back to normal activities, stay home and away from others again until, for at least 24 hours, both are true: your symptoms are improving overall, and you have not had a fever (and are not using fever-reducing medication). Then take added precaution for the next 5 days.