

Community Weekly

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Travel Guidelines

By Cynthia Morrow, MD, MPH

After the last year of taking so many precautions, many people may be thinking about travel as we head into summer, particularly people who have been vaccinated. The good news is that it is safe for people who are fully vaccinated to travel as long as they use some common sense precautions!

People who are fully vaccinated can travel within the United States without being tested before or after travel unless their destination requires it. Because travel increases your chance of getting and spreading COVID-19, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends delaying travel until you are fully vaccinated. As a reminder, “fully vaccinated” means two weeks after your final dose of a COVID-19 vaccine.

During travel, everyone should continue to wear a mask over their nose and mouth in any public place, regardless of vaccination status. Masks are required for everyone on planes, buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation and in hubs such as airports. The best practice is to continue to avoid crowds, maintain 6 feet of distance from others, and regularly wash your hands.

Here are some additional suggestions for how to plan for a safer trip:

- If you are not vaccinated, consider trying to get vaccinated before you go. If that is not an option, get tested with a diagnostic (PCR or antigen) test 1-3 days before your trip. After travel, self-quarantine for 7 days and get tested again with a viral test 3-5 days after you return.
- The safest option is to travel with other fully vaccinated individuals. If some in your group are not vaccinated, everyone outside your household should wear a mask when in enclosed places, such as in a vehicle.
- Save yourself unpleasant surprises and delays by checking for restrictions at your destination and anywhere you might stop along the way.
- Choose to visit destinations without crowds and avoid poorly ventilated, indoor spaces.
- A safer choice would be a short road trip with few stops. If you choose to fly, try to minimize the number of connecting flights or layovers in airports if feasible.

- A safer place to stay is in a vacation rental or in the home of a fully vaccinated friend or family member. Crowded hotels and cruises where people share common areas such as lobbies or breakfast seating may not be as safe.
- If you are visiting the beach or a pool, stay 6 feet away from others, whether in or out of the water.

We are hopeful that the weekly number of cases of COVID-19 will continue to decrease both locally and across the country. And we are hopeful that every day, more people will make the smart decision to get vaccinated. If we all do our part, we can look forward to a summer of fun with our family and friends!