



MARCH 1, 2024

# Respiratory Virus Guidance

## WHAT TO KNOW

Each year, respiratory viruses are responsible for millions of illnesses and thousands of hospitalizations and deaths in the United States. In addition to the virus that causes COVID-19, there are many other types of respiratory viruses, including flu and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). The good news is there are actions you can take to help protect yourself and others from health risks caused by respiratory viruses.

## CDC's Respiratory Virus Guidance

This guidance provides practical recommendations and information to help people lower risk from a range of common respiratory viral illnesses, including COVID-19, flu, and RSV.


### [Preventing Respiratory Viruses](#)

- Core Prevention Strategies
  - [Immunizations for Respiratory Viruses](#)
  - [Hygiene and Respiratory Virus Prevention](#)
  - [Taking Steps for Cleaner Air for Respiratory Virus Prevention](#)
  - [Preventing Spread of Respiratory Viruses When You're Sick](#)
  - [Treatment of Respiratory Viruses](#)
- Additional Prevention Strategies
  - [Masks and Respiratory Virus Prevention](#)
  - [Physical Distancing and Respiratory Viruses](#)
  - [Testing and Respiratory Viruses](#)

## Get the Guidance Summary Graphic

Download and share this infographic that summarizes key strategies in the guidance.


## Respiratory Virus Guidance Snapshot




**CORE STRATEGIES**

### Core Prevention Strategies


**Immunizations**




**Hygiene**




**Steps for Cleaner Air**




**Treatment**



**Stay Home and Prevent Spread\***







**ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES**

### Additional Prevention Strategies


**Masks**



**Distancing**




**Tests**



**Layering prevention strategies can be especially helpful when:**


- ✓ Respiratory viruses are causing a lot of illness in your community
- ✓ You or those around you have risk factors for severe illness
- ✓ You or those around you were recently exposed, are sick, or are recovering

**\*Stay home and away from others until,**




**and**

Your symptoms are getting better




You are fever-free (without meds)

**for 24 hrs**



**Then take added precaution for the next 5 days**



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CDC's respiratory virus guidance consists of 5 core and 3 additional prevention strategies.

[Español](#) 

## Special Considerations

In addition to CDC's Respiratory Virus Guidance, there are several special considerations for people with certain risk factors for severe illness.

### [Risk Factors for Severe Illness from Respiratory Viruses](#)

- [Older Adults](#)
- [Young Children](#)
- [People with Weakened Immune Systems](#)
- [People with Disabilities](#)
- [Pregnant People](#)

## Treatment as Prevention

Treatment is a core prevention strategy to lower risk from respiratory viruses.


### Keep Reading:

[Treatment of Respiratory Viruses](#)

## About the Guidance

- [Background for the Guidance](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

### Notice

CDC offers separate, specific guidance for healthcare settings ([COVID-19](#), [flu](#), and [general infection prevention and control](#)). [Federal civil rights laws](#)  may require reasonable modifications or reasonable accommodations in various circumstances. Nothing in this guidance is intended to detract from or supersede those laws.

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SOURCES

**CONTENT SOURCE:**

[National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases \(NCIRD\)](#)