

CDC updates coronavirus Thanksgiving guidance, urges against travel

For those who travel, the health agency recommends doing so 'as safely as possible'.

In a telebriefing held Thursday, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) warned against traveling to visit relatives and friends this Thanksgiving and holiday season and urged those with possible coronavirus symptoms or other illnesses to stay home.

"With Thanksgiving approaching our hearts and minds turn to visiting family and friends," said Dr. Henry Walke, the agency's COVID-19 incident manager, during the briefing. "Amid this critical phase, the CDC is recommending against travel during the Thanksgiving period."

Walke added that for those who do decide to travel, the health agency recommends doing so "as safely as possible," which includes wearing a mask while in public, maintaining social distancing, and washing hands often with soap and water.

The agency also recommends travelers consider whether someone they may see during their visit is at risk for severe illness, whether community spread is high where you live, or at your destination, if there are local quarantine requirements, and if travel plans require bus, train, or air, and if so, what social distancing measures will be implemented.

CDC SUGGESTS AMERICANS DITCH SINGING, LOUD MUSIC, ALCOHOL FOR HOLIDAYS DUE TO PANDEMIC

An updated version of the guidelines was posted to the CDC website on Thursday. Citing the 1 million new cases of coronavirus reported in the U.S. last week, the agency said the safest way to mark Thanksgiving this year would be "to celebrate at home with the people you live with."

"Gatherings with family and friends who do not live with you can increase the

chances of getting or spreading COVID-19 or the flu,” the guidelines state.

In the telebriefing held before the guidelines were posted, Walke and Dr. Erin Sauber-Schatz, who is leader of the Community Intervention and Critical Population Task Force, further clarified that members of the family who were not living within the same house for the 14 days prior to the holiday were not considered part of the same household, including returning college students and military members.

ADJUST YOUR THANKSGIVING PLANS FOR SAFETY, EXPERTS URGE

If non-household members of the family are planning to attend your Thanksgiving gathering, the agency recommends that attendees wear masks, social distance, wash hands often, bring their own food, drinks, plates, and utensils, avoiding going in and out of areas where food is being prepared or handled, and to opt for single-use products like salad dressings and condiment packets.

For overnight guests, the CDC recommends assessing for risk for infection, wearing masks while inside the house, improving ventilation, avoiding singing or shouting indoors, avoiding interactions with household pets, monitoring guests for symptoms, and spending time outdoors.

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“Our hope is that the recommendations posted online today can help people celebrate as safely as possible — all Americans want to do the right things to protect our families, even when there are hard decisions to be made,” he said.

This is a developing story. Check back for updates.

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