

Air travel

Most viruses do not spread easily on flights because of how air circulates and is filtered on airplanes. However, it is likely that you will be sitting within 6 feet of others for long periods of time, which can increase your risk of getting COVID-19. Air travel also requires spending time in security lines and airport terminals, which can bring you in close contact with other people and frequently touched surfaces. Finally, during the holidays, planes and airports may be significantly more crowded than usual, which also increases risk of transmission.

Car travel

Don't share vehicles with people you don't live with. Vehicles are small enclosed spaces where COVID-19 can spread easily between people. If you must share a vehicle, try to ride with the same people each time, make sure everyone wears a face covering and open the windows to maximize outdoor air circulation as much as you can.

If you must travel, plan ahead

Is COVID-19 spreading where you are traveling?

The more cases at your destination, the more likely you are to get infected during travel and spread the virus to others when you return. For cases in the last 7 days by state, see https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_casesper100klast7days

Are you, your travel companions, or those you are visiting at higher risk for serious illness?

Older adults and people with underlying medical conditions are more likely to get really sick if they get COVID-19. The virus can be spread among people who are not feeling any symptoms.

Will you be able to social distance from others during your trip?

It is hard to maintain 6 feet of space from others when using public transportation like airplanes, buses, trains, and taxis. Even when traveling in your own vehicle, you may find yourself in close contact with other people and frequently touched surfaces while making stops along the way.

Can you watch for symptoms and get tested?

In the event that you must travel, it's important to monitor yourself for symptoms for 14 days after your return and get tested immediately if you have any symptoms. Even if you don't develop symptoms, consider getting tested around 3-7 days after your return, particularly if returning from an area with more COVID-19 transmission than we have in the Bay Area, or if you engaged in activities that put you at risk for getting COVID-19. If you do any activity where you might have been exposed to COVID-19, including travel, reduce your contact with other people as much as possible for 14 days, keep your distance from others, and make extra sure that you always wear a face covering anytime you're outside your household.