

# CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) LIFE AFTER LOCKDOWN

## COVID-19 SAFETY TIPS FOR WORKPLACES, RESTAURANTS & HAIR SALONS

Returning to some pre-pandemic activities carries some risk, but we now have a better understanding of how this virus spreads and how we can protect ourselves from getting infected. For most people, the benefits (protecting mental health, earning income) outweigh the risks. However, if you are vulnerable or live with someone who is vulnerable, the risk-benefit requires careful consideration. The vulnerable include people who are 65 or older, have a chronic condition such as diabetes, heart, kidney liver and lung disease, cancer, obesity or immunocompromised.

**As workplaces, restaurants, and hair salons begin to reopen, the big question is: How can people stay safe in these environments?** Experts agree that focusing on behaviors you can control remains essential – washing your hands, social distancing (staying 6 feet away from others), and wearing a mask. Although no activity outside your house is risk-free, there are best practices to follow.



### WORKPLACE

#### **How do I know that my coworkers aren't coming into the workplace sick and possibly infecting me?**

Much of the responsibility lies with the employer. It's important they screen people, not just for fever but other symptoms of COVID-19 such as cough, muscle aches and pain, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. Employees experiencing any of those symptoms, should be instructed to stay home and possibly be evaluated for COVID-19 so that they don't transmit the virus to anyone else. Employers need to create a culture in which workers who are sick don't feel guilty or fear reprisals if they stay home.

#### **Should everyone wear face coverings at the workplace?**

Face masks aren't enough all on their own: They are part of an overall safety strategy. Remember that masks and face coverings aren't a substitute for social distancing; if you're trying to decrease transmission, being 6 feet apart is the best thing you can do.

Desks should be placed 6 feet apart. When that's not possible, consider using transparent plastic shields (also known as sneeze shields) to separate workstations. Many workplaces may determine that it's okay not to wear a mask if you're in your own cubicle or office, however it is likely that most employers are going to enforce mask wearing for the foreseeable future.

#### **What kind of mask or face covering should I wear?**

Cloth face coverings are accessible. If you wear a store bought, online ordered or homemade face covering, make sure it's made from a dense, multi-layered cotton. If you hold the mask up to the light and you can see through it, that's not going to be very effective in reducing the transmission of the virus. Face shields are better than masks at reducing virus transmission. The translucent plexiglass face shields that come with a headband, which protect the eyes are less restrictive on the mouth and nose.

#### **Is it necessary to wipe down high-touch surfaces at the workplace such as coffee machines, counter tops, and door handles?**

Although most coronavirus transmission is from person-to-person contact, it's still a good idea to sanitize surfaces.

#### **Should I be worried about bringing the virus home on my shoes, handbag, or backpack?**

Transmitting the virus through shoes or bags is a very small concern.

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## RESTAURANTS

### **Do we have any evidence that COVID-19 can be spread by the people who are preparing or plating food?**

COVID-19 is a respiratory disease, and there's no evidence that it can be transmitted by food workers through food - if a food worker sneezes on another person, they can transmit it that way.

### **What kind of seating situations should I be looking for?**

Transmission is less likely to happen in outdoor settings compared to indoor settings, so choosing outdoor seating at a restaurant is one way to minimize your risk. Restaurants should allow social distancing by spacing tables at least 6 feet apart.

### **Should I wear a face covering at a restaurant?**

You obviously can't wear a mask when you're eating or drinking, but it's a good idea to wear them when you aren't. Wear your face covering when entering the restaurant, while being seated, and upon exiting. You can still talk with a mask on, so ideally you would be wearing it anytime that you're not eating or drinking.



## HAIR SALONS & BARBERSHOPS

### **Is it safe to get a haircut?**

Any social interaction is an opportunity for the virus to spread from person to person. Although you can't socially distance yourself from the person doing your hair, you can make sure the salon enforces social distancing between clients. One way to reduce your risk is make sure your salon is very careful in not allowing sick employees to work and that the employees wear face masks or shields. If you're concerned about the precautions that a salon is taking, call them or visit their website to find out what they're doing.

### **Does spraying disinfectant in the air or on chairs between clients help prevent the spread of the virus?**

Surface transmission is less likely than person-to-person transmission, but it's still a good idea to sanitize surfaces.

### **Should I wear a mask while getting a haircut? Should my stylist?**

If both the stylist and the client wear effective masks or face coverings properly, the threat of passing the virus at hair salons is relatively low. The risk of going to a hair salon isn't zero because masks aren't perfect, either in protecting you or spreading the virus, but it's relatively safe.

