CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

MENU ›

WEAR A MASK.

Visiting Beaches and Pools

Updated July 1, 2020   Print

What you need to know

- Stay home if you are sick.
- Stay at least 6 feet away, both in and out of the water, from people you don't live with.
- Wear a mask when you are not in the water.
- Wash your hands often and don't share items with people you don't live with.

The places we visit to swim, play, and relax in water include beaches — swim areas in oceans, lakes, and other natural bodies of water — and pools, water playgrounds, and hot tubs. There is no evidence that SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, can spread to people through water in these places.

LOWER RISK   MEDIUM RISK   HIGHER RISK

In or out of the water, stay at least 6 feet away from people you don't live with

The virus is thought to spread mostly person-to-person, by respiratory droplets released when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. The virus might also spread to hands from a contaminated surface and then to the nose, mouth, or possibly eyes. Infected people can spread the virus whether or not they have symptoms.

Fortunately, there are several actions you can take to reduce your risk of getting or spreading the virus when you go to public swim areas, such as beaches, pools, water playgrounds, and hot tubs.

Before you go

- Stay home if you have symptoms of COVID-19, have been diagnosed with COVID-19, are waiting for COVID-19 test results, or were recently exposed to someone with COVID-19.
- Check to see if the public swim area, pool, water playground, or hot tub has steps in place to prevent the spread of the virus.
- Bring supplies that help you and others stay healthy—for example, a mask (or two, for each person, in case one gets wet), hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, disinfectant wipes, tissues, and paper towels.

Use social distancing in and out of the water

- Whether you're in or out of the water, stay at least 6 feet away from people you don't live with.
- Avoid crowded swim areas, beaches, pools, water playgrounds, and hot tubs where you cannot stay 6 feet away from others.

Wear a mask

- Wear masks when you are **not** in the water.
  - Do not place a mask on children younger than 2 years of age or on anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without help.
- Masks are especially important when physical distancing is hard.

Wear a mask when you are not in the water

Wash hands often and avoid sharing items

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially before eating or drinking and when you arrive and leave the swim area. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol and rub until your hands are dry.
  - Hand sanitizers are not as effective when hands are visibly dirty or greasy, so wipe sand or dirt off before applying it.
- Avoid sharing items, such as food, equipment, toys, and supplies, with people who don't live with you.
- If you are not wearing your mask, make sure to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or inside of your elbow, throw the tissue in the trash, and wash your hands immediately, or if soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer.

Check out more information on how to protect yourself and others. Know the symptoms of COVID-19, and contact your health care provider if you develop symptoms.

Swimming does carry some health and safety risks. Visit CDC's Healthy Swimming website for information to help you prevent illness and drowning, so you can safely enjoy the fun and health benefits of swimming.

Other Resources