

MESSAGING TOOLKIT

Celebrating Thanksgiving Safely This Year (Newsletter)

From Public Health Madison & Dane County

November 13, 2020

Thanksgiving celebrations must look different this year because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Public Health Madison & Dane County strongly urges everyone to stay home and to celebrate Thanksgiving only with people you live with. As cases and hospitalizations have been dramatically rising both locally and nationally over October and November. Gathering for Thanksgiving, even if the gathering is small, puts our county and state at risk of overwhelming our health care system.

Here are some ideas of safe things you could do this Thanksgiving:

- Host a virtual dinner or celebration
- Watch parades and sports events from home
- Shop for gifts online and mail them to people
- Play a virtual board game
- Share recipes with friends/family and cook the same meal in different homes
- Order takeout or delivery from local businesses offering Thanksgiving meals

These activities are not safe to do this Thanksgiving:

- Attending a crowded, large, and/or indoor gathering
- Coming within 6 feet of someone you don't live with, including hugging or touching
- Not wearing a mask to a gathering
- Sharing food, cups, or utensils
- Seeing someone in person who is at higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19. This includes anyone over age 65 and [people with certain health conditions](#)

If you are going to gather, gatherings with these precautions are less safe than staying home, but could reduce your risk. Note that following only one or two of these precautions isn't sufficient; you must follow as many precautions as possible to lower your risk:

- Ensuring everyone attending a gathering quarantines strictly for 14 days before the gathering (no in person work, school, or other outings)
- Wearing masks and staying at least 6 feet from people you don't live with
- Staying outside
- Not eating together
- Keeping events as short as possible
- Keeping events as small as possible ([find out the risk](#) of someone at your gathering having COVID-19)

If you attend any kind of gathering this Thanksgiving, you should stay home for 14 days after the event and monitor yourself for [COVID-19 symptoms](#). If you are not able to quarantine before or after an event, then do not attend.

Given the current spread of the virus in our communities, we urge everyone to not gather for Thanksgiving this year and to celebrate virtually instead. If you are going to gather no matter what, then we urge you to follow as many precautions as possible to slow the spread of COVID-19. Through our individual actions, we can protect our health care systems this holiday season.

For more information and data about COVID-19, visit Public Health Madison & Dane County's website: <http://publichealthmdc.com/coronavirus>

Celebrating Thanksgiving Safely This Year (Newsletter-- short version)

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Sample Facebook posts to pair with a graphic

1. Thanksgiving celebrations must look different this year because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Please stay home and to celebrate Thanksgiving only with people you live with so that you can protect your family and friends.
2. Given the current spread of COVID-19 in our communities, we urge everyone to not gather for Thanksgiving this year and to celebrate virtually with people you don't live with. Try setting up a virtual cooking session, ordering takeout from a local restaurant, or simply celebrate with the people you live with.
3. For Thanksgiving this year, it's important that everyone stays home so that we don't spread COVID-19 and overwhelm our health care systems. We'll be putting on our pajamas, ordering takeout, and giving our loved ones a phone call. How are you celebrating Thanksgiving virtually?

Sample Twitter posts

1. COVID-19 is spreading rapidly in Dane County. We need everyone to be a leader and stay home this Thanksgiving. Celebrate virtually or with the people you live with.
2. Thanksgiving needs to look different this year because of COVID-19. Please stay home and celebrate virtually with people you don't live with.
3. This Thanksgiving, stay home! Together, we can protect our health care systems by changing our holiday plans. How are you celebrating from home this year?