

Stay updated with the latest COVID-19 guidance from the CDC!

### COVID-19 Vaccine

On February 28<sup>th</sup>, Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Director, Mandy Cohen, endorsed the CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' (ACIP) recommendation for adults ages 65 and older to receive an additional updated 2023-2024 COVID-19 vaccine dose. The recommendation is based on data providing evidence for increased risk of severe disease from COVID-19 in older adults, along with currently available data of vaccine effectiveness. To read the CDC's media statement, click [here](#).

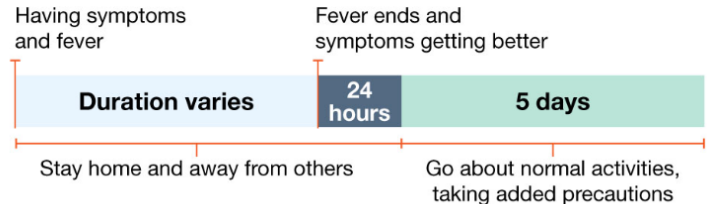
### COVID-19 Updated Guidance

On March 1<sup>st</sup>, CDC released updated recommendations for respiratory viruses, including COVID-19. This new guidance is for respiratory viruses like COVID-19, flu, and RSV, as they share similar transmission methods, symptoms, and prevention strategies. This unified approach aims to simplify recommendation and address common risks more effectively.

The new CDC guidance is outlined below:

- When you have a respiratory virus - **stay home and away from others if you have respiratory symptoms**. These symptoms can include fever, chills, fatigue, cough, runny nose, and headache.
- Return to normal activities when, for at least 24 hours, both are true:
  - Your symptoms are getting better overall, **and**
  - You have not had a fever (and are not using fever-reducing medication)
- When you go back to your normal activities, **take added precaution over the next 5 days**, such as taking additional steps for cleaner air, hygiene, masks, physical distancing, and/or testing when you will be around other people indoors.
  - Keep in mind that you may still be able to spread the virus that made you sick, even if you are feeling better. You are likely to be less contagious at this time, depending on factors like how long you were sick or how sick you were.

Example 1: Person with fever and symptoms.



**Respiratory Virus Guidance Snapshot**

**Core prevention strategies**

- Immunizations
- Hygiene
- Steps for Cleaner Air
- Treatment
- Stay Home and Prevent Spread\*

**Additional prevention strategies**

- Masks
- Distancing
- Tests

\*Stay home and away from others until, for 24 hours BOTH:

- Your symptoms are getting better
- You are fever-free (without meds)

Then take added precaution for the next 5 days

Layering prevention strategies can be especially helpful when:

- ✓ Respiratory viruses are causing a lot of illness in your community
- ✓ You or those around you have risk factors for severe illness
- ✓ You or those around you were recently exposed, are sick, or are recovering

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Outlined by CDC, key drivers and indicators for their revised COVID-19 recommendations include:

- Due to the effectiveness of protective tools and high degree of population immunity, there are now fewer hospitalizations and deaths due to COVID-19.
- Protective tools, like vaccines and treatments, that decrease risk of COVID-19 disease (particularly severe disease) are now widely available.
- There is a high degree of population immunity against COVID-19. More than 98% of the U.S. population now has some degree of protective immunity against COVID-19 from vaccination, prior infection, or both.

CDC offers separate, specific guidance for healthcare settings ([COVID-19](#), [flu](#), and [general infection prevention and control](#)). In addition to CDC's Respiratory Virus Guidance, there are [several special considerations](#) for people with certain risk factors for severe illness, including older adults, young children, people with weakened immune systems, people with disabilities, and pregnant people.

To read the complete report, click [here](#). Also, the CDC has created an information FAQ page for to the new respiratory guidance, available [here](#).

Importantly, **Massachusetts Department of Public Health is currently reviewing the updated CDC guidance and anticipates updating their guidance to align more closely with CDC.** At this time, [Massachusetts guidance](#) still indicates that people should still isolate for 5 days following symptom onset and then wear a mask in public for days 6-10 when they have COVID-19.

Stay tuned for MDPH updates!