

# Masks

**Masks partially reduce risk;** N95/FFP2 more than surgical, surgical more than cloth, cloth more than none. Wear better masks when visiting riskier environments. Use N95 to visit crowded and poorly-ventilated indoor locations. Consider wearing masks of grade higher than N95 when visiting a hospital or in the presence of an infected person.

**N95 masks should be comfortable.** You might have to try a few models before finding one that fits your face's shape. Adjust the elastic straps so that they still press the mask against your face but without causing pain to your ears. Bend the metal wire on top of your mask so that it fits the shape of your nose. A poorly-fitted mask is still better than no mask but way less effective than a well-fit one.

**Test-fit masks:** well-fit non-rigid masks should change in shape as you inhale & exhale.

**Rotate masks:** for most people, buying 5 masks a month and rotating between them daily is a reasonable trade-off. Keep them dry.

**Covid is airborne:** it means it lingers in the air for a few hours. Wear a good mask before entering poorly-ventilated rooms that might have been recently occupied by an infected person (*e.g., elevators*). Pay attention to good fit and help others fit their masks.

# Ventilation

**Opening windows and filtering air reduces risk** for those in the same room as an infected. The cheapest air filters (“Corsi-Rosenthal boxes”) only cost about \$100.

**Air recirculation** only improves air quality if paired to filtering; otherwise, it helps the virus to circulate.

**Outdoor events are generally safe,** though observe social distancing if there's chanting involved. Wear N95 masks when visiting public restrooms and other indoor facilities, which are particularly risky if used by a lot of people within a short time frame.

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*by Luca Dellanna – more on [Luca-Dellanna.com](https://luca-dellanna.com)*

# Social distancing

**The further away you are from someone**, and the better the ventilation, **the less the risk**, though there is no magical distance after which risk goes to zero (e.g., “six feet”).

# COVID Vaccines

**COVID vaccines reduce the risk of severe outcomes.** That said, just like wearing a helmet reduces your chances of dying in a motorcycle crash but doesn't make you invulnerable, vaccines reduce your risk of severe disease but don't nullify them.

**COVID vaccine's effect fades over time.** Weigh the need of a booster against your individual risk and COVID prevalence in your area.

**Vaccinated people are still contagious** (only slightly less so than the unvaccinated). Because of the above, vaccine pass policies reduce the risk that an unvaccinated contracts the disease in a high-risk environment but do not create risk-free environments for the vaccinated.

# Rapid tests

**Swab tests shouldn't be painful.** If you fear a bad experience from a doctor with a “heavy hand,” feel free to ask him/her to be soft.

**Swab tests should include the throat** to avoid missing infections that developed there but not in the nose yet.

**Rapid tests miss early stage infections.** If you're testing yourself before meeting with your family, do it just before meeting them, not the previous day. Look closely not to miss an eventual faint red line indicating an early-stage infection. Don't keep test kits outside in freezing weather, it might spoil them.

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