

Road to **WELLfluent**TM

Embrace better health. / A Wellness Newsletter for Jackson Health System Employees

COVID-19 & Holiday Celebrations

As many people in the United States begin to plan for fall and winter holiday celebrations, the CDC offers the following considerations to help protect individuals, their families, friends, and communities from COVID-19. These considerations are meant to supplement—not replace—any state, local, territorial, or tribal health and safety laws, rules, and regulations with which holiday gatherings must comply. When planning to host a holiday celebration, you should assess current COVID-19 levels in your community to determine whether to postpone, cancel, or limit the number of attendees.

Virus spread risk at holiday celebrations

Celebrating virtually or with members of your own household pose low risk for spread. In-person gatherings pose varying levels of risk. Event organizers and attendees should consider the risk of virus spread based on event size and use of mitigation strategies, as outlined in the Considerations for Events and Gatherings. There are several factors that contribute to the risk of getting infected or infecting others with the virus that causes COVID-19 at a holiday celebration. In combination, these factors will create various amounts of risk, so it is important to consider them individually and together:

- Community levels of COVID-19 – Higher levels of COVID-19 cases and community spread in the gathering location, as well as where attendees are coming from, increase the risk of infection and spread among attendees. Family and friends should consider the number and rate of COVID-19 cases in their community and in the community where they plan to celebrate when considering whether to host or attend a holiday celebration. Information on the number



of cases in an area can be found on the area's health department website.

- The location of the gathering – Indoor gatherings generally pose more risk than outdoor gatherings. Indoor gatherings with poor ventilation pose more risk than those with good ventilation, such as those with open windows or doors.

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- The duration of the gathering – Gatherings that last longer pose more risk than shorter gatherings.
 - The number of people at the gathering – Gatherings with more people pose more risk than gatherings with fewer people. The CDC does not have a limit or recommend a specific number of attendees for gatherings. The size of a holiday gathering should be determined based on the ability to reduce or limit contact between attendees, the risk of spread between attendees, and state, local, territorial, or tribal health and safety laws, rules, and regulations.
 - The locations attendees are traveling from – Gatherings with attendees who are traveling from different places pose a higher risk than gatherings with attendees who live in the same area. Higher levels of COVID-19 cases and community spread in the gathering location, or where attendees are coming from, increase the risk of infection and spread among attendees.
 - The behaviors of attendees prior to the gathering – Gatherings with attendees who are not adhering to social distancing (staying at least 6 feet apart), mask wearing, hand washing, and other prevention behaviors pose more risk than gatherings with attendees who are engaging in these preventative behaviors.
 - The behaviors of attendees during the gathering – Gatherings with more preventive measures (such as mask wearing, social distancing, and hand washing) in place pose less risk than gatherings where fewer or no preventive measures are being implemented.
- Do not host or participate in any in-person festivities, if you or anyone in your household:
 - Has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and has not met the criteria for when it is safe to be around others.
 - Has symptoms of COVID-19.
 - Is waiting for COVID-19 viral test results.
 - May have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days.
 - Is at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19.
 - People at increased risk for severe illness.
 - If you are at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19, or live or work with someone at increased risk of severe illness, you should:
 - Avoid in-person gatherings with people who do not live in your household.
 - Avoid larger gatherings and consider attending activities that pose lower risk (as described throughout this page) if you decide to attend an in-person gathering with people who do not live in your household.

People who should not attend in-person holiday celebrations

- People with or exposed to COVID-19

Get your flu vaccine

Gatherings can contribute to the spread of other infectious diseases. Getting a flu vaccine is an essential part of protecting your health and your family's health this season. September and October are good times to get vaccinated. However, flu vaccines are still useful any time during the flu season and can often be accessed into January or later.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays.html>

The Great American Smokeout[®], November 17

Quitting smoking isn't easy. It takes time. And a plan. You don't have to stop smoking in one day. Start with day one. Let the Great American Smokeout event on the third Thursday of November be your day to start your journey toward a smoke-free life. You'll be joining thousands of people who smoke across the country in taking an important step toward a healthier life and reducing your cancer risk. Plus, the American Cancer Society can help you access the resources and support you need to quit.

Visit <https://www.cancer.org/healthy/stay-away-from-tobacco/great-american-smokeout.html> for more information.



The path to understanding diabetes STARTS HERE

Whether you've been newly diagnosed, have been fighting against type 1 or type 2 diabetes for a while or are helping a loved one, you've come to the right place. This is the start of gaining a deeper understanding of how you can live a healthier life—with all the tools, health tips and food ideas you need. Wherever you're at with this disease, know that you have options and that you don't have to be held back. You can still live your best life. All you have to do is take action and stick with it.

Understanding type 1

Here's what you need to know about type 1 diabetes. The CDC estimates that nearly 1.6 million Americans have it, including about 187,000 children and adolescents. Type 1 diabetes occurs at every age and in people of every race, shape and size. There is no shame in having it, and you have a community of people ready to support you. Learning as much as you can about it and working closely with your diabetes care team can give you everything you need to thrive.

In type 1 diabetes, the body does not produce insulin. The body breaks down the carbohydrates you eat into blood sugar that it uses for energy—and insulin is a hormone that the body needs to get glucose from the bloodstream into the cells of the body. With the help of insulin therapy and other treatments, everyone can learn to manage their condition and live long, healthy lives.

Remember: this is a condition that can be managed. By living a healthy lifestyle filled with exercise and proper diet, you can live a normal life and do everything you set out to do.

Understanding type 2

Type 2 diabetes is the most common form of diabetes—and it means that your body doesn't use insulin properly. And while some people can control their blood sugar levels with healthy eating and exercise, others may need medication or insulin to help manage it. Regardless, you have options—and we're here with the tools, resources and support you need.



A key part of managing type 2 diabetes is maintaining a healthy diet. You need to eat something filling that helps you feel better and still makes you feel happy and fed. Remember, it's a process. Look for helpful tips and diet plans that best suit your lifestyle—and how you can make your nutritional intake work the hardest for you.

Fitness is another key to managing type 2. And the good news, all you have to do is get moving. The key is to find activities you love and do them as often as you can. No matter how fit you are, a little activity every day can help you be in charge of your life.

Understanding gestational diabetes

Gestational diabetes can be a scary diagnosis, but like other forms of diabetes, it's one that you can manage. It doesn't mean that you had diabetes before you conceived or that you will have diabetes after you give birth. It means that, by working with your doctor, you can have a healthy pregnancy and a healthy baby. No matter what, know that you have all the support you need for both you and your baby to be at your best.

Understanding gestational diabetes

We don't know what causes gestational

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diabetes, but we know that you are not alone. It happens to millions of women. We do know that the placenta supports the baby as it grows. Sometimes, these hormones also block the action of the mother's insulin to her body and it causes a problem called insulin resistance. This insulin resistance makes it hard for the mother's body to use insulin. And this means that she may need up to three times as much insulin to compensate.

The key to treating it is to act quickly—because as treatable as it is, gestational diabetes can hurt you and your baby. Work with your doctor to keep your blood sugar levels normal, through special meal plans and regular physical activity. Your treatment may also include daily blood sugar testing and insulin injections.

Understanding A1C

A1C tests can identify prediabetes, which raises your risk for diabetes. It can be used to diagnose diabetes. And it's used to monitor how well your diabetes treatment is working over time. It's also a critical step in forming your game plan to manage diabetes with your diabetes care team.

This relatively simple blood test can tell you a lot. The test results give you a picture of your average blood sugar level over the past two to three months. The higher the levels, the greater your risk of developing diabetes complications. Your doctor will tell you how often you need the A1C test, but usually you'll have the test at least twice a year if you're meeting your treatment goals. If you're not meeting your goals or you change treatments, you may need to get an A1C test more often.

When it comes to the numbers, there's no one-size-fits-all target. A1C target levels can vary by each person's age and other factors, and your target may be different from someone else's. The goal for most adults with diabetes is an A1C level that is less than 7%.

A1C test results are reported as a percentage. The higher the percentage, the higher your blood sugar levels over the past two to three months. The A1C test can also be used for diagnosis, based on the following guidelines:

- If your A1C level is between 5.7 and less than 6.5%, your levels have been in the prediabetes range.
- If you have an A1C level of 6.5% or higher, your levels were in the diabetes range.

Eye health

A doctor will advise people with diabetes are at increased risk of diabetic retinopathy, a leading cause of blindness. However, this risk may be prevented or delayed by careful control of blood glucose. People with diabetes also may be at greater risk for eye problems such as cataracts and glaucoma. Ocular symptoms associated with diabetes include fluctuation in visual acuity, double vision, dry eye, recurrent lid infections (blepharitis), and changes in color vision.

Loved ones

Hearing that your child or loved one has diabetes can be a shock. But after that shock wears off, know that there are plenty of things you can do to help manage this illness. With planning and preparation, you can get back to normal life and resume your daily activities.

You can make physical activity part of every day. You can create a balanced diet for your child—one that everyone can live with and thrive on. Throughout it all, know that diabetes can't keep your child from doing whatever they want and achieve their highest goals. There are Olympic athletes with diabetes, as well as professional football players, politicians, actors, rock stars and CEOs. So, take a deep breath. You can do so much to make sure the people you love are thriving as they manage their diabetes.

Our Safe at School® campaign ensures that the diabetes management needs of students are met so your children are healthy and safe when they are at school. By working as a team, families, health care providers and school staff work to monitor blood sugar and administer insulin. In addition to that, we can help ensure that all students have trained staff on hand who can recognize and treat high and low blood sugar and administer emergency glucagon.

Source: <https://www.diabetes.org/diabetes>



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