

Healthy Events

The actions you take and the plans a group makes can keep us all healthier together. Always follow all CDC, national, state and local laws and guidelines, but there are other steps we can take as individuals, groups, and the Society as a whole. This guide is intended for use during non-pandemics. During pandemics follow specific guidelines from CDC, national, state and local laws and guidelines.

The Common Offenders:

Let us begin by identifying the most common infection concerns at large gatherings.

- Respiratory illnesses:
 - They are usually caused by viruses.
 - They can cause coughing, sneezing, runny nose, fever, and/or congestion.
 - They are most often spread by respiratory droplets in the air from breathing, sneezing, coughing, talking, singing, or shouting.
 - They are sometimes called “a cold,” “influenza,” “the flu,” or “influenza-like illness”.
 - Influenza is the disease that the annual “flu shot” helps prevent
 - CDC information for respiratory illnesses: <https://www.cdc.gov/nonpharmaceutical-interventions/gathering/event-attendees.html>

- Gastrointestinal (GI) illnesses:
 - They can be caused by viruses or bacteria.
 - They can cause vomiting, diarrhea, intestinal pain, fever, and/or dehydration.
 - They are most often spread by touching something someone with the illness has touched, either directly (shaking hands) or indirectly (door handles or food someone with a GI illness has touched).
 - They are sometimes called a “stomach bug,” “stomach flu,” or “food poisoning”.
 - An example of a severe gastrointestinal illness from group gatherings is Norovirus. Norovirus spreads quickly and easily.
 - CDC information for norovirus: <https://www.cdc.gov/norovirus/index.html>

What We Can Do:

Personal Actions. These are actions you take individually to keep yourself, your family and those around you safe.

- **Stay home when sick.**
 - Follow the CDC and State Department of Health’s guidelines for all illnesses.
 - If you have acute symptoms like coughing, sneezing, runny nose, diarrhea, vomiting, nausea, or stomach pain, stay home after you get sick to lower the chances of spreading your illness to others.
 - If you have a fever: stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone without the use of fever-reducing medicines, such as acetaminophen. This will help ensure that your fever is truly gone and you are past the point of being contagious.
 - If you have GI symptoms: stay home for at least 2 full days after any diarrhea, vomiting, nausea or stomach pain symptoms stop.
- **Wash your hands.** Handwashing is one of the most effective ways to keep yourself and others well.

- Wash hands thoroughly and for at least 30 seconds with soap and water.
- Use hand sanitizer when handwashing is not available.
- Bring your own hand sanitizer to events.
- Take responsibility for your health at events
 - Follow event guidelines.
 - Stay at least 3 feet away from sick people.
 - Bring your own pens/pencils, eating utensils, cups, etc.
 - If you get ill at an event, inform the event staff and leave the event promptly.
 - If you feel seriously ill, consider leaving site and then calling or texting event staff.
 - Cover coughs and sneezes with your elbow.

Group Actions. These are steps for groups planning and hosting events and attendees at events.

- Be aware of any health advisories for your local area.
- Consider infection control when choosing an event site.
 - Consider the expected attendance and the population density of the site.
 - Consider ways the site could cause or prevent transmission (PA system, outside spaces if fair weather, local infection rates, etc.).
- Provide ways to promote cleanliness at the event site
 - Pens/clipboards at gate:. Keep “clean” pens separate from “used” pens.
 - Make it easier for people to wash their hands. Offer more handwashing stations and hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol based.
 - Place smaller hand sanitizers throughout the event.
 - Have a clear plan and guidance including signs, locations of handwashing stations and bathrooms.
 - Use the printable posters from the CDC or your department of health.
 - https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/materials.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fhandwashing%2Fresources.html
 - <https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/handhygiene/materials.html>
 - <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/p-01710.htm>
 - <http://www.ndhealth.gov/disease/gi/handwashing.aspx>
 - <https://doh.sd.gov/documents/Food/Handwashing.pdf>
 - Michigan: refers to CDC site
 - Canada: https://ipac-canada.org/photos/custom/pdf/IPAC_cleaninghands85x11English.pdf
- Identify places where crowding is likely and try to provide additional spacing. Ideally, 3 or more feet should be between people, especially people who will be working.
 - Gate: both for staff and people checking in
 - List table: for staff and combatants checking in (consider tournaments that minimize the number of times combatants need to check in at the list table)
 - Populace space
- Prepare for attendees who may become ill
 - Keep a supply of disposable clean, simple masks for attendees that become ill at the event to wear before they leave the event but promote their prompt departure.
 - If possible, identify a separate area that attendees who become ill and can't leave the event immediately or who don't have a space to self-isolate.

- Identify who should be notified if someone becomes ill at the event. Include this in your event information and signs.
- Prepare for Event Staff and Volunteers who may be ill:
 - Make a back-up plan in case a main event volunteer will not be attending if ill.
 - Consider choosing key event staff from different residences, if possible.
 - Procure and bring cleaning supplies. Ensure that key event staff know where all the cleaning supplies are kept and the protocols for their use.
 - Do not allow ill attendees or event staff in food service areas until at least 48 hours after their symptoms have resolved.
 - Determine the need to modify or cancel your event.
 - Have a plan if you need to cancel your event including timeline, communication and notifications.
- Clean up after someone has been ill.
 - Clean Up Vomit or Diarrhea Immediately!
 - After someone vomits or has diarrhea, always thoroughly clean then disinfect the entire area immediately.
 - Put on rubber or disposable gloves, and wipe the entire area with paper towels, soap, and hot water.
 - Then disinfect the area using a bleach-based household cleaner as directed on the product label.
 - If no such disinfectant is available, you can use a solution made with 5 tablespoons to 1.5 cups of household bleach per 1 gallon of water.
 - Leave the bleach disinfectant on the affected area for at least 5 minutes.
 - Then clean the entire area again with soap and hot water.
 - Discard the gloves and other disposable cleaning supplies.

Society Actions. These are steps we do as a community.

- Encourage people who are sick to stay home. Don't encourage a social environment that rewards "I work even when I'm sick."
- Normalize (remove the stigma) of wearing a mask at any gathering.
- Normalize not shaking hands as a greeting. Hand to hand contact is one of the easiest ways to spread both respiratory and gastrointestinal illnesses.
- Consider ways to decrease the number of people crowding at gate.
 - Advance registration (online or self-printed forms).
 - A mobile "check-in" or app.
 - Self-printed waiver forms.
- Incorporate online attendance and activities for in-person events. This will encourage and allow the participation of people who are ill and who may be high risk for complications from a community acquired illness.

Key Times to Wash Hands from the CDC <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>

- Before, during, and after preparing food

- Before and after eating food
- Before and after caring for someone at home who is sick with vomiting or diarrhea
- Before and after treating a cut or wound
- After using the toilet
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- After handling pet food or pet treats
- After touching garbage

Key Times to Wash or Sanitize Hands at public events

- At all of the other Key Times
- Before you enter the event
- After you leave the event
- Before engaging in any close contact with others
- After engaging in any close contact with others
- Before and after using a high touch piece of equipment: calculator, pen,
- Before and after touching a high touch surface
- Before entering the bathroom and after using the bathroom