

## Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

# How to Protect Yourself from COVID-19

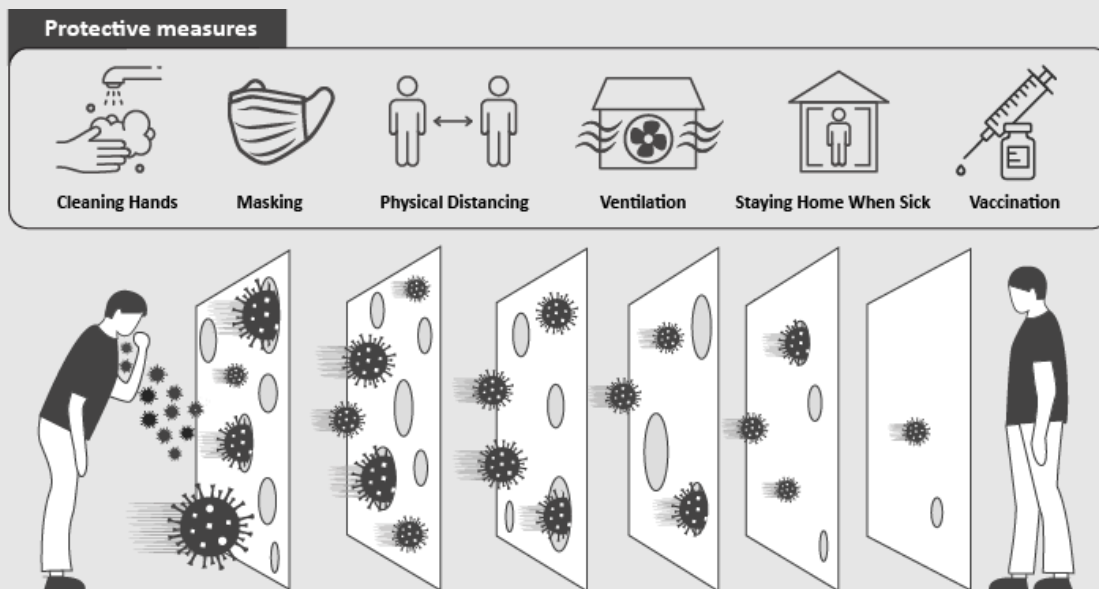
This fact sheet outlines prevention measures you can use to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Vaccination is one of the strongest layers of prevention. Combine it with other layers of prevention to lower your risk.

## Ways COVID-19 is spread

- COVID-19 is spread most commonly during close contact (generally less than 2 metres) through an infected person's respiratory particles generated when a person breathes, coughs, sneezes, talks, or sings.
- These particles range in size from large ones which fall quickly to the ground to smaller ones, known as aerosols, which can remain suspended in the air.
- Aerosols may transmit over long distances, but the risk is higher with longer periods of time in indoor spaces with poor ventilation and lack of masking or distancing.
- Objects or surfaces (e.g., furniture, fixtures, and gadgets) that have the COVID-19 virus on them may transmit the virus to your hands then to your eyes, nose and mouth.

## Layers of protection against COVID-19

Use **multiple layers** of prevention to provide the best protection, especially if you cannot avoid closed spaces, crowded places, and close contact. No single intervention on its own is perfect at preventing COVID-19 spread and protection from each method is complimentary and additive.



Adapted from: Rockefeller Foundation. Layers of protection against covid-19 - the "Swiss cheese" model [video recording on the Internet]. New York: Rockefeller Foundation; 2021 [cited 2022 Mar 11]. 1:15 min. Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ou88lei-52k>

## Get vaccinated

- Get fully vaccinated for COVID-19, plus a booster if you are eligible. Being vaccinated helps to protect you from severe disease and hospitalization due to COVID-19.
- The more people who are vaccinated, the less COVID-19 will circulate in the community.
- For more information visit Ministry of Health website: [How to Book a COVID-19 Vaccine Appointment](#).



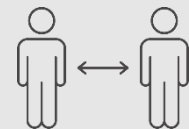
## Stay home when sick and what to do when exposed

- Stay home when you are sick. You may be requested to get tested. See Public Health Ontario's [How to Self-Isolate](#).
- You may be advised by public health to stay home if you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19. People can be infectious before they are sick.



## Practice physical distancing and avoid crowded spaces

- Two metres distancing or further helps to prevent transmission, especially when indoors or unmasked.



## Spend time outdoors or in well-ventilated indoor spaces

- Even when outdoors, physical distancing helps to prevent transmission.
- Ensure your ventilation system is in good working order. If you don't have a ventilation system, open windows to increase fresh air flow. You can also run your bathroom or kitchen exhaust fans longer or often.



## Wear a well-fitting mask in public

- Consider wearing a well-fitting mask, especially in shared indoor spaces. See Public Health Ontario's [Optimizing the Use of Masks Against COVID-19](#).



## Practice respiratory etiquette and keep things clean

- Wash your hands frequently.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes.
- Clean high-touch surfaces regularly.



The information in this document is current as of April 7, 2022.