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Rating the risk of summer activities during COVID

As we reach the middle of summer, many of us are anxious to venture out after months of quarantine. But what is the safest way to enjoy the outdoors right now?

While your personal risk of infection depends on your age, health and how concentrated the coronavirus is in your area, this list ranks how high (or low) the risk is associated with enjoying some popular summertime activities.



An outdoor celebration with more than 10 guests: medium to high risk

In the case of family-oriented celebrations such as weddings and family reunions, people may not social distance as readily and that may increase the risk.

What can lower the risk?

Keep your gathering small and local. The larger the guest list (and the more people who travel to attend), the greater potential for infection. Also, think twice about inviting guests that are older or have conditions that put them at higher risk of complications if they're infected, such as diabetes and heart disease.



Eating indoors at a restaurant: medium to high risk

Indoor dining is still quite risky. When you have people sitting, eating and talking within close proximity, the risk for infection increases exponentially. Even if indoor spacing is optimal, there's no guarantee that the restaurant is properly ventilated. Also, people have a tendency to linger when dining out, which increases person-to-person contact and virus exposure.

What can lower the risk?

Outdoor seating, single use options for condiments, servers wearing masks, easy access to hand-washing stations and last but not least, going only with members of your household.



Exercising outdoors: low risk

Unless you're playing group sports, exercising outdoors (including running on spacious, uncluttered paths) is a good way to burn off steam while staying socially distant.

What can lower the risk?

Coronavirus is a numbers game. The more people involved in the sport or activity (basketball, soccer, etc.) the greater the chance of becoming infected — especially from someone who's asymptomatic.



Renting a vacation house with another family: low risk

Experts agree that if both families have been quarantining and limiting their exposure to others, this is pretty safe.

What can lower the risk?

It's important to be on the same page with the family that you're traveling with in terms of trip expectations (social distancing, cleaning the shared space upon arrival, etc.). If you're heading to an area where there's been an increase in cases, it may be best to postpone the trip.



A BYOB backyard BBQ with one other household: low to medium risk

Meeting in a spacious outdoor area with only a small group isn't too risky. But the safety level here depends on whom you invite and what their behavior is like at the party.

What can lower the risk?

To keep risk low, avoid sharing food, drinks or utensils — make it a BYO-everything party.