



COVID-19 Vinalhaven Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

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COVID-19 Update 5-13-20

COVID-19 TRANSMISSION RISKS AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

Information for today's Update was retrieved May 12, 2020 from a **post**¹ by Dora Anne Mills, MD, MPH. **Click Here**² to hear a podcast of the entire post. Dr. Mills is the Chief Health Improvement Officer at MaineHealth in Portland and served for 15 years as Maine's State Health Officer and Director of the Maine CDC.

GET IT – Know the Risks

Risks for Covid-19 transmission appear to increase with these factors, which spell **"GET IT"**.

GATHERINGS: Groups of people in close proximity, the more people and the closer they are, the riskier.

ENERGETIC exhalations: Activities that involve singing, loud talking, screaming, or other exhalations or verbalizations that require more energy than normal indoor talking. These behaviors are known to project higher concentrations of viral droplets and project them farther than six feet. And of course, a heavy sneeze or cough may do the same thing.

TRAVEL: Activities that result in travel (e.g. people gathering who then disperse, or people who travel from afar to visit or for business).

INDOORS: Indoor locations, especially if the ventilation is low.

TIME: The longer the contact—more than 10 minutes, for instance—the higher the risk.

Who is Most At Risk?

Those at high risk for severe COVID-19, a large proportion of the population, include:

- 22% of Mainers who are 65 or older
- 42% who are obese (especially the 9% with severe obesity)
- 33% with high blood pressure
- 11% with diabetes
- 11% with asthma in Maine (especially the 2/3 of these who are on daily medication for asthma)
- 6% with COPD/emphysema
- 3% who are immunocompromised

Staying Safe – Avoiding Risks

To stay safe, if you are in a high-risk group, you should continue to stay home as much as possible. Whenever any of us are with non-household members, we should:

- **Wear a mask** whenever the six feet distance cannot be assured, including outdoors. If you are walking or visiting with a friend outdoors, wear a mask. If you are walking with a household member outdoors in an area where others commonly walk, wear a mask.
- **Maintain six feet distance** between you and others.
- **Avoid in-person gatherings**, especially indoors. This means if you need to visit with loved ones, minimize the numbers of people present and time spent together, visit outdoors, make sure everyone is masked, and always maintain six feet distance.
- **Minimize travel** or being with people who have traveled. Especially avoid exposure to those from where there is much more viral transmission (e.g. those from out of state).
- Take advantage of the **outdoors!**
- **Wash or sanitize your hands** multiple times per day.
- **Make sure you and anyone you're interacting with are not ill** and do not have any symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g. new cough, shortness of breath, fever, chills, headache, muscle ache, sore throat, loss of sense of smell or taste).

¹ www.facebook.com/dora.a.mills/posts/10222842855358720

² www.podbean.com/ew/pb-z6pbt-dc2d6a