

COVID-19

Social bubble



What is a social bubble?

A social bubble (also known as a pod) is a small group of people who agree to socialize only with each other and stick to the same COVID-19 prevention measures, both when the bubble is socializing together and in daily life. Members of the social bubble include people you live with (e.g., family members, roommates) and can include people who you do not live with.

Advantages of a social bubble

- Our mental and emotional health are important during the pandemic. Feeling connected to others can help reduce stress and anxiety. A small, tight circle of contacts within a social bubble, in addition to staying connected virtually, can help.
- Before joining a social bubble, consider if you are **at risk for getting very sick from COVID-19**.
- While a social bubble can give you more in-person interactions, it doesn't mean socializing with everyone you know. Bubbles need to be kept small to be effective in protecting people inside the bubble, especially if there is a lot of COVID-19 activity in your community.
- You may have to choose which social activities are most important to you. The more social situations your bubble chooses to participate in (for example, in-person school or work activities, religious organization activities, recreational sports, etc.), the greater your chances are of being exposed to COVID-19.
- Even with extra steps to try and stay safe, meeting with others in your social bubble does increase your risk for getting COVID-19. It's important that everyone in your small group stays at least 6 feet apart, wears a mask (even when outdoors if less than 6 feet apart) and practices good hand hygiene.

Keep your bubble as safe as possible

- Before you form your social bubble, communicate openly about expectations, risks, and fears with other potential members. Once the bubble is established, ensure that open communication is continued.
- Be upfront about expectations and only interact with those whom you trust will follow the guidelines.
- Don't include anyone who doesn't take precautions seriously.
- Keep your bubble small and consistent, continue to keep physical distance.
- Set the ground rules that everyone in your bubble wears a mask, stays home whenever possible, and practices good hand hygiene.
- Keep your bubble to the same people; every additional person adds more risk.
- Follow any additional guidelines set by your [local health department](#).

What happens if someone in my bubble is exposed to COVID-19 or gets sick?

- Communicate openly with bubble members if something happens that might put others at risk of exposure.
- If one person in the group tests **positive for COVID-19**, that person will need to be isolated for at least 10 days and everyone else who **had close contact** with that person will need to quarantine (stay home).
- **For those who need to quarantine, staying home for 14 days after the last exposure to the person who tested positive is safest.**¹
- If exposed persons are not able to stay home for the full 14 days and do not have symptoms, quarantine can end:
 - After Day 10 without testing; or
 - After Day 7 with a negative PCR or antigen test performed on or after Day 5.
- If close contacts end quarantine early, they still need to monitor for symptoms and follow other recommendations (e.g., wear a mask, watch their distance, wash hands often) for the full 14-day period.

¹ The day of your last exposure to a person with COVID-19 counts as Day 0.