Patient Pearls

Staying Safe from COVID-19: Holiday Gatherings

During the holiday season, you may be wondering if it is safe to gather and celebrate with loved ones. The safest way to celebrate is with members of your household alone. The more people come into contact with others outside their household, the higher the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Tips for Success

If you do have a gathering with people outside of your immediate household, observe these safety recommendations:

- Limit the size of your gathering: per the current NYS executive order, private gatherings are capped at ten people
- Maintain at least six feet of physical distance from people not in your household at all times, whether you're sitting or standing
- Wear face coverings at all times, including when talking to others. You can remove face covering briefly to eat or drink as long as you stay at least six feet away from everyone outside your own household
- If weather doesn't allow for outside gathering, then ensure increased ventilation by opening some windows inside
- Wash hands with soap and water often. If not available, use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol
- Serve shared food safely using single-serve disposable containers
- Limit gatherings to no more than two hours: the longer people gather together, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spreading
- Let your guests know your expectations for safe behaviors before your gathering

If anyone in your household develops COVID-19 symptoms after attending a gathering:

- Get tested for COVID-19
- Notify the other attendees as soon as possible regarding the potential exposure
- Stay home as much as possible for 14 days after the gathering or until your household member tests negative
- Avoid being around people who have higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19

ACCOUNTABLE
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