



My Fellow Americans,

After months of lockdown and isolation, you may be ready to spend some time at the beach or on a family road trip. But before you pack your suitcases, you should know we are in the midst of another surge in the number of new COVID-19 cases. Last week, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced a spike in 13 states — including Texas and Florida — as well as Puerto Rico. The U.S. now leads the world in infections with almost two million confirmed cases.

What's causing the sudden surge? It's difficult to say. But, experts believe the recent loosening of business restrictions in many states is contributing to the community spread. Texas, for instance, reopened parts of its economy in May. Then last week, Texas Health and Human Services reported record numbers of new cases for several days. The Florida Department of Health recently reported its biggest increase in new cases since March. Medical experts warn we could see as many as 100,000 new cases in the coming months.

"The pandemic is still here. Between 800 and 1,000 people are dying a day," warns Dr. Ashish Jha, director of the Harvard Global Health Institute. "We can't become immune to this. We can't."

COVID-19 cases have been reported in all 50 states. The CDC recommends the best way to avoid getting sick is to simply stay home. The CDC also suggests you ask yourself the following questions before making travel plans.

- **Is COVID-19 spreading where I'm going?**

Visit [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus) to learn where the disease is spreading.

- **Is COVID-19 spreading in my community?**

Visit [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus) and see COVID-19 Cases and Deaths by State.

- **Will the people I plan to travel with and I be within six feet of others during or after my trip?**

Being within six feet of others increases your chances of getting infected and infecting others.

- **Am I and the people I'm traveling with more likely to get very ill from COVID-19?**

Older adults and those with serious underlying medical condition are at higher risk.

- **Do I live with someone who is more likely to get very ill from COVID-19?**

If you get infected while traveling you can spread COVID-19 to loved ones when you return, even if you don't have symptoms.

- **Does the state or local government where I live, or at my destination, require me to stay home for 14 days after traveling?**

Some state and local governments may require people who have recently traveled to stay home for 14 days.

- **If I get sick with COVID-19, will I have to miss work or school?**

People with COVID-19 disease need to stay home until they are no longer considered infectious.

If you choose to travel this summer, bring a safety kit including masks, gloves, sanitary wipes and hand sanitizer — and use them.

I cannot stress enough the importance of making good decisions. We must be aware that our choices and decisions have an impact on others.

The greatest weapon we have in the fight against COVID-19 is the care and compassion we show each other. If we don't, we could find ourselves in a long fight against a relentless disease.



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