CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Cruise Ship Travel During COVID-19

Updated July 18, 2022

CDC is reviewing this page to align with updated guidance.

> ⓘ As of July 18, 2022, CDC's COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships is no longer in effect. CDC will continue to publish guidance to help cruise ships continue to provide a safer and healthier environment for passengers, crew and communities going forward. For more information, please see the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

What You Need to Know

- Check if you are up to date with your COVID-19 vaccines before cruise ship travel.
- If you have a medical condition or are taking medication that weakens your immune system, you might NOT be fully protected even if you are up to date with your COVID-19 vaccines. Talk to your healthcare provider about your risk before travel. Even after vaccination, you may need to continue taking precautions.
- The virus that causes COVID-19 spreads easily between people in close quarters on board ships. If the virus is spreading on board a cruise ship, passengers and crew are at risk for infection.
- Check directly with your cruise line about their testing or vaccination protocols before travel.
- If your cruise line does not have a testing requirement, get tested for current infection with a COVID-19 viral test as close to time of cruise departure as possible (no more than 3 days before you travel).
- Get tested again with a COVID-19 viral test 3-5 days after your cruise.

Before Cruise Travel

Do not travel or board a cruise ship if...

- You are sick with COVID-19.
- You tested positive for COVID-19 less than 10 days ago (day 0 is the day your symptoms started or the day your positive test sample was taken if you had no symptoms).
- You had close contact with a person with COVID-19 in the past 5 days and are recommended to quarantine.
  - Get tested at least 5 days after your last close contact. Make sure your test result is negative and you remain without symptoms before traveling.
  - Properly wear a well-fitting mask when you are around others through day 10. If you are unable to wear a mask, you should not travel during this time.

Check with your cruise line regarding their policies.

Plan ahead

- Be up to date with your COVID-19 vaccines before travel.

- Check if your cruise line requires proof of vaccination or pre-embarkation testing, or has any other requirements to board.

- If traveling by air before or after cruise travel, check if your airline or destination (see here for U.S. requirement) requires any testing, vaccination, or other documents.

- Consider getting travel insurance. Consider buying additional insurance that covers health care and emergency evacuation, especially if you will be traveling to remote areas. Make sure you have a plan to get care overseas, in case you need it.

Pre-embarkation Testing

- If your cruise line does not have a testing requirement, get tested ⧉ for current infection with a viral test (**no more than 3 days**) before boarding a cruise ship, regardless of your vaccination status. Get your test results before you board your cruise.
  - If you recovered from COVID-19 in the past 90 days, testing is not generally recommended unless you have symptoms. People can continue to test positive for up to 90 days after diagnosis and not be infectious to others. Check with your cruise line regarding their specific policies, including if you need to provide a copy of your positive test result and a letter from your healthcare provider documenting that you recovered from COVID-19.

- If you or your travel companions have COVID-19 symptoms or test positive at embarkation, the cruise ship may deny you from boarding. If you are allowed to board, you may be required to isolate or quarantine, depending on your symptoms and test results.

During Cruise Travel

Protect Yourself and Others

- Wash your hands often with soap and water or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

- Follow recommendations for protecting yourself and others.

- If you have symptoms of COVID-19, stay in your cabin and notify the onboard medical center immediately. It's important to report your symptoms, even if they are mild, to protect others on board including passengers at increased risk for severe illness and crew.

Masks

- Follow any ship-specific mask protocols.

- Follow CDC's recommendations for wearing masks in travel and public transportation settings.

> **If You Develop Symptoms or Use a Self-Test on Board with a Positive Result**
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> - Isolate yourself in your cabin immediately.
> - Call your ship's medical center.
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> **Cruise ships may have their own requirements for testing, isolation, quarantine, mask wearing, and dining for people with COVID-19 or their close contacts.** If you have questions about a cruise ship's specific policies, please contact them directly.
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> - If you disembark the ship before completing your isolation or quarantine period, you should follow CDC's guidance, or local guidance if you disembark in another country.

After Cruise Travel

- Self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms.
  - Follow additional guidance if you know you were exposed to a person with COVID-19.

- Get tested ↗ for current infection with a COVID-19 viral test 3–5 days after your trip or if you develop symptoms.
- Isolate if you develop symptoms or your test result is positive.
  - If your test result is positive, contact your state, territorial, local or tribal health department to tell them you have COVID-19 and recently traveled on a cruise ship.
- Follow all state, territorial, local or tribal recommendations or requirements after travel.

Frequently Asked Questions

What happened to CDC's COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships? ⌄

CDC has worked closely with the cruise industry, state, territorial, and local health authorities, and federal and seaport partners to provide a safer and healthier environment for cruise passengers and crew. Cruise ships have access to guidance and tools to manage their own COVID-19 mitigation programs. Additionally, cruise travelers have access to recommendations that allow them to make informed decisions about cruise ship travel. While cruising poses some risk of COVID-19 transmission, CDC will continue to publish guidance to help cruise ships continue to provide a safer and healthier environment for crew, passengers, and communities going forward.

Why was the cruise ship color-coding system removed? ⌄

The previous color-coding system under CDC's COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships depended upon each cruise line having the same COVID-19 screening testing standards, which may now vary among cruise lines. Therefore, the cruise ship color status webpage has been retired. CDC will continue to provide testing recommendations for cruise ship operators to follow and cruise ships will continue to report COVID-19 cases to CDC.

How can travelers find out about COVID-19 outbreaks on cruise ships? ⌄

Cruise travelers have the option of contacting their cruise line directly regarding outbreaks occurring on board their ship.

More Information

If you need to contact your health department: State & Territorial Health Department Websites

Guidance for Cruise Ships on the Mitigation and Management of COVID-19

Travel during the COVID-19 Pandemic

International Travel

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers for Travelers

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