

NEWS BRIEF

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CDC Urges Americans Not to Travel for Thanksgiving

During a press briefing on Thursday, Nov. 19, 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended that Americans don't travel for Thanksgiving to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The recommendation—which is not an official federal order against traveling—comes just one day after the United States surpassed 250,000 COVID-19-related deaths.

Dangers of Traveling

Transportation hubs, such as airports and bus stations, are an area of concern for public health officials, particularly as COVID-19 continues to surge throughout the country. Preventive measures such as social distancing may not be able to be maintained while traveling, increasing the risk of potential exposure.

The CDC stated in the press briefing that 30% to 40% of COVID-19's spread is driven by asymptomatic individuals, or people who aren't exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. In other words, those who travel and may not know they have COVID-19 due to a lack of symptoms risk exposing fellow travelers and family members.

Similarly, those who don't have COVID-19 but travel during the Thanksgiving holiday risk being exposed to the coronavirus during their travels, and subsequently spreading COVID-19 at any gatherings they attend.

Tips for Those Who Are Traveling

During the briefing, the CDC discussed that many Americans will still travel during the Thanksgiving holiday. If you're traveling for Thanksgiving, be sure

"We understand that people want to see their family and relatives and do it as they've always done it. But this year, we're asking them to limit their travel."

- *Dr. Henry Walke, COVID-19 incident manager for the CDC*

to check travel restrictions before leaving and keep these tips in mind:

- Wear a mask in public settings and when on public transportation.
- Practice social distancing by staying at least 6 feet apart from people you don't live with.
- Frequently wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water aren't available, use hand sanitizer.
- Do not touch your mask, eyes, nose and mouth.
- Bring extra masks, hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes.

In addition, avoid making any unnecessary stops while traveling to limit your potential exposure as much as possible.

