

Infection Prevention Guidelines

Respiratory virus infections caused by **influenza viruses, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), common cold viruses, and COVID virus variants** are common during the winter months when people spend more time indoors. People spread these viruses through the air in droplets created when they cough, sneeze, talk, yell, and sing.

As the COVID epidemic has evolved, guidelines on preventing acquiring and transmitting infections by wearing masks have evolved. Wearing a mask has become a personal choice. Scouts should respect the choices of others to wear or to not wear masks. Scouts and adults, even those who have been vaccinated, should consider wearing a mask inside and wearing a mask outside if they are positioned within 6 feet of another person. When face masks are not worn during eating, taking meals outside and keeping well-spaced can reduce risks of acquiring and transmitting respiratory infections.

<https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/covid/school-nutrition-professionals.html>

Ways to protect yourself and others from respiratory virus infections like **influenza, RSV, common cold viruses, and COVID:**

1. Cover coughs and sneezes.
2. **Stay home if you are sick.**
3. Wear a mask if you are indoors with other people or outdoors with other people within 6 feet.
4. Wash your hands frequently.
5. BSA supports recommendations by the CDC for flu and COVID vaccinations for Scouts and adults.

<https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/ahmr/medical-formfags/>

Hand washing is important to prevent wound infections, food-related infections, and respiratory infections. Everyone should wash their hands:

- **Before, during, and after** preparing food
- **Before** eating food
- **Before and after** caring for someone at home who is sick with vomiting or diarrhea
- **Before and after** treating a cut or wound
- **After** using the toilet
- **After** blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- **After** touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- **After** handling pet food or pet treats
- **After** touching garbage

<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>

- **After** shaking hands.