

MIT MEDICAL PRESENTS the Do-re-mi's of COVID-19 Risk



A solitary figure, twirling joyfully, surrounded by mountains, trees, and edelweiss. Social distancing at its best. Sadly, most of us don't have access to a pristine Alpine meadow. Fortunately, MIT Medical is here to help you learn to evaluate the risk associated with other common activities.

Ready to learn the do-re-mi's of COVID-19 risk assessment? Let's start at the very beginning...

When you read, you begin with A-B-C... actually, let's skip right to C — five C's, to be exact:

Closed spaces. Crowded places. Close contacts. Continuous exposure. Community spread.

In other words, to avoid COVID-19, stay away from indoor spaces with lots of people that you will be close to for extended periods of time. And pay attention to the positive-test rate in your community, because every activity is riskier when community spread is higher.

OVERALL RISK

ZERO

LOW

MODERATE

HIGH

YIKES

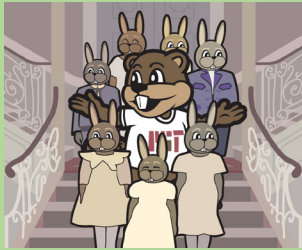
Frolicking alone in a meadow

The hills are alive, but they aren't crawling with COVID-19. There's virtually no chance of encountering the virus when you are outdoors and alone. Even if others are nearby, the risk of outdoor transmission is low, as long as everyone maintains at least six feet of distance from each other or wears masks when social distancing is impossible. Fresh air and exercise are important, so don't be afraid to get out there and climb every mountain!



Socializing with your bubble

There's not much risk in spending time with members of your own household or another small group of select others. Just make sure that everyone in your bubble is equally committed to minimizing risk by limiting their outside-the-bubble contacts and being honest about any breaches. That means strict social distancing and masking at all times outside the group — and no surreptitious trips to the gazebo for a clandestine rendezvous.



Grocery shopping

Picking up a few of your favorite things means being indoors with people outside of your bubble. But the size of the store may reduce your risk — cavernous indoor spaces are safest. Further reduce risk with masking and social distancing. Brief close contacts, like someone reaching past you to grab a box of cereal, aren't a major concern. But don't dawdle over the schnitzel; make a list and shop efficiently. Reducing the time you spend in the store reduces your risk of exposure.



Going to a hair salon

Are you ready to say so long, farewell, *auf wiedersehen*, goodbye to that scraggly quarantine hair? Risks in salons and barbershops include relatively small indoor spaces and prolonged, close contact with another person. Decrease risk by patronizing establishments that insist on mask wearing and social distancing. Limited capacity, barriers between stations, and bans on both banter and blow-drying reduce risk further. Make an early-morning appointment, and spend as little time there as possible. Get the haircut; skip the shampoo and color.



Going to a bar, nightclub, or party

Feeling like a lonely goatherd? Tempted to go out for a few beers or dancing? Unfortunately, a relatively small indoor space that's densely packed with unmasked people is COVID-19's favorite habitat and the environment most likely to promote viral spread. Add people shouting to be heard over the background noise, and you've got the final ingredient in your recipe for a super-spreader event. Seriously, don't do it. Instead, get creative with your next Zoom gathering, and live to party another day.

