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**Health Department of Northwest Michigan COVID-19 Update**

**Here's what's cooking for a safe holiday season**  
***Health Department offers recipe for safer gatherings***

What's on the menu for your holiday season? We've cooked up a new recipe to help you and your family enjoy the holiday safely and prevent the spread of COVID-19. The recipe for a safe Thanksgiving can be found [here](#).

"We are encouraging everyone 5 and older to get vaccinated as soon as possible so they can share a happy and healthy holiday season with their families and friends," said Lisa Peacock, Health Officer with the Health Department of Northwest Michigan. "If you get your first shot this week, you will be fully vaccinated in time to safely enjoy the upcoming holidays," she added.

The ingredients for a safe holiday season with family and friends include:

- Vaccination
- Mask
- Hand Soap
- Hand Sanitizer
- Outdoors
- Communication
- Safe Travels

To cook up a safe holiday, following this recipe:

**Get vaccinated.** Children and adults age 5 and up should get a COVID-19 vaccine. Some groups of people are eligible for a [third shot or booster](#). To schedule an appointment exclusively for children 5 to 11 years old, [click here](#). To schedule an appointment for anyone 12 and older, [click here](#). A parent/guardian must accompany anyone younger than 18 to a COVID-19 clinic. Please bring an insurance card to the appointment. Anyone may call 800-432-4121 if they have questions or are not able to find a time or date that works for them and/or their child. Saturday clinics are available for those 5-11 years of age.

**Wear a mask.** Wear a cloth or surgical face mask over your mouth and nose when grocery shopping or in other public indoor settings, or when serving food.

**Wash your hands** before eating or serving food.

**Outdoors** is safer than indoors—enjoy a picnic or other outdoor activities, weather permitting.

*The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is mandated by the Michigan Public Health Code to promote wellness, prevent disease, provide quality healthcare, address health problems of vulnerable populations, and protect the environment for the residents and visitors of Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego counties. For more information, visit [nwhealth.org](http://nwhealth.org).*

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**Communicate** in advance with guests about your COVID-19 ground rules and the precautions you're taking. Cancel plans if you are sick, and stay away from others.

**Safe Travels.** If possible, delay travel unless you are fully vaccinated. If you are traveling with unvaccinated family members, such as children who are not yet eligible to be vaccinated, take additional precautions. Avoid crowds, wear a mask, and get tested before and after your trip. A list of test sites is available [here](#). In order to assure availability for emergent and urgent care, residents are encouraged to seek an alternative to hospital emergency departments to obtain a COVID-19 test.

Stay up to date on the latest information in the Health Department of Northwest Michigan jurisdiction by [liking and following our Facebook page](#) and visiting our [COVID-19 Data Dashboard](#). To locate a testing facility, visit the [Michigan COVID-19 Test Finder website](#). To track the risk levels of COVID-19 pandemic indicators, visit the [MI Safe Start Map website](#). For more information regarding the COVID-19 vaccine, visit the MDHHS [vaccine website](#) or the [CDC vaccine website](#).