

## How to avoid getting sick while traveling

It's easy to enjoy the holiday season when it means spending extra time with those you love! And for a lot of people, this involves traveling to see their loved ones. The holiday season is one of the busiest times for travelers and is also the peak of cold and flu season, so it's important to be prepared if you'll be in tight spaces with others. Here's how you can keep yourself protected from the cold and flu while traveling by plane, train or car!

### **Wash your hands and use hand sanitizer**

This goes without saying, but the easiest way to kill any germs you pick up is by getting them off your hands! Before you touch your mouth, eyes, nose or other surfaces, stop any potential spread of the cold or flu by getting rid of it completely! While [washing your hands](#) is still your best bet, using hand sanitizer when soap and water aren't available (like before you eat in the car) is still helpful in killing germs!

### **Wear a mask**

If you're immunocompromised, you're probably familiar with this. But if you're not, you can still benefit from wearing a mask in public spaces. In addition to hard surfaces, certain viruses can be passed through [droplets in the air](#). An easy way to protect yourself from airborne illnesses is by covering your mouth and nose. And, if you feel you're coming down with something, be considerate of your fellow travelers and put on a mask to protect them as well!

### **Wipe down surfaces**

When you're packing everything you and your family will need for your trip, it's easy to forget about the small things like hand sanitizer and surface wipes! But if you're concerned about getting sick, make sure you pack these first in an easy-to-reach place. Airplane seat-back trays contain [eight times more](#) bacteria than the bathroom flush button and aren't always cleaned between flights. You'll never know if the person sitting in the seat before you had a cold, so protect yourself by wiping down the trays and armrests ASAP.

### **Prepare your immune system ahead of time**

It's important to do what you can to not get sick during your trip and travel, but it's also important to keep your immune system healthy before you depart. Make sure your [immune system is in the best shape](#) by eating right, getting enough sleep and making time for yourself.

*If you do catch the flu or a cold while you're traveling, don't worry! You could still see a Village Health Partners physician from wherever you're traveling. Ask your scheduler if you qualify for a televisit when scheduling your next visit to video chat with your physician.*