What’s the Risk This Winter?

How risky are winter activities when it comes to the spread of COVID-19? Infectious disease experts across UVM Health Network ranked the activities below to help you make smart, healthy decisions this season.

These rankings assume that you are wearing a mask while indoors and/or with others from beyond your immediate household and that you’re at least 6 feet apart from others, when possible.

1. Getting a flu shot
2. Eating a holiday meal with your immediate household
3. Lighting the menorah with your immediate household
4. Snow blowing or shoveling your driveway or sidewalk
5. Building a snowman with your immediate household
6. Snowshoeing
7. Ice fishing in a shanty solo
8. Ice fishing in the open air
9. Snowmobiling solo
10. Cross-country or Nordic skiing
11. Mailing homemade cookies or edible treats to family and friends
12. Sledding at a community hill
13. Visiting a cut-your-own tree farm with your immediate household
14. Ice climbing
15. Alpine or downhill skiing or snowboarding
16. Having a snowball fight with friends while at least 6 feet apart
17. Ice skating outdoors at a public facility
18. Enjoying a socially distanced bonfire with friends
19. Visiting a library in person
20. Building a snowman with others from outside your household
21. Attending a hockey game
22. Shopping at an indoor mall
23. Attending a public tree-lighting ceremony
24. Attending a holiday parade
25. Getting a manicure or pedicure
26. Getting a massage
27. Snowmobiling tandem with someone from outside your household
28. Taking a picture with Santa at a store or mall
29. Attending a place of worship for holiday service
30. Caroling outside door-to-door or in an outdoor public venue
31. Watching a movie in a theater
32. Eating a holiday meal with extended family or friends
33. Attending or hosting a holiday party
34. Attending a cookie swap with others from outside your household
35. Attending a book club in person
36. Attending a knitting, quilting or sewing group in person
37. Eating indoors at a restaurant
38. Using a hot tub with others from outside your household
39. Using a sauna with others from outside your household
40. Playing in a hockey game
41. Ice skating indoors at a public facility
42. Ice fishing in a shanty with others
43. Attending an indoor holiday concert
44. Attending a live indoor performance
45. Attending a New Year’s Eve party at a friend’s home
46. Attending a public New Year’s Eve party at a hotel or facility
47. Bar hopping or pub crawling
What’s the Risk?

Wondering which activities are high risk during COVID-19? Infectious disease expert Tim Lahey, MD, MMSc, of UVM Medical Center, has ranked common activities in Vermont and Northern New York. Remember: wearing a mask, especially when participating in any indoor or other higher risk activities, reduces that risk.

**LOW RISK**
- Opening the mail
- Going for a walk, run or bike ride at least 6’ away from others
- Getting restaurant takeout
- Pumping gas
- Playing tennis
- Going camping
- Going for a walk, run or bike ride with others
- Playing golf while maintaining physical distancing

**MODERATE-LOW**
- Grocery shopping
- Going to the hospital for routine care
- Going to a library
- Sitting in a doctor’s waiting room with physical distancing measures in place
- Staying at a local hotel
- Eating outside at a restaurant
- Spending an hour at a playground
- Attending a backyard barbecue
- Going to a popular lakeside beach

**MODERATE RISK**
- Sending younger and special needs kids to in-person school while other kids engage in hybrid or online education while all participate in reasonable transmission prevention measures
- Shopping at a mall
- Working a week in an office building
- Swimming in a public pool
- Spending an afternoon with an elderly relative or friend in their home
- Hugging or shaking hands with a friend
- Going to a hair salon or barbershop
- Eating inside at a restaurant at 50% capacity

**MODERATE-HIGH**
- Attending a wedding, funeral or church service limited to 50% capacity
- Having dinner inside someone else’s house
- Traveling by plane
- Playing basketball
- Playing football
- Sending all kids back to in-person school with inconsistent attention to mask wearing and physical distancing measures

**HIGH RISK**
- Working out at a crowded gym
- Going to a crowded amusement park
- Attending a large music concert or other crowded indoor gathering at >50% capacity
- Visiting a bar, restaurant or other crowded indoor social setting