



Ways to dodge norovirus (stomach flu) this season

Levels of “the cruise ship virus” are high or rising in some areas – and hand sanitizer doesn’t work well on this very contagious bug.

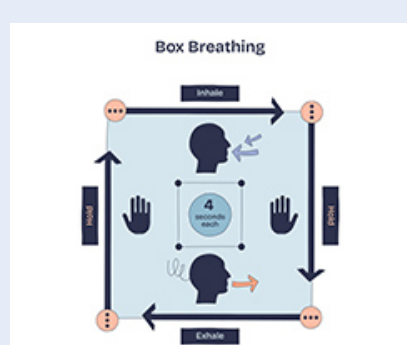
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News you can use – Wellness



Mint to be: Holiday mocktails

What if you could still enjoy seasonal drinks, but make a few healthy tweaks? See a registered dietitian’s ideas for cocktail alternatives, plus recipes for healthier holiday sides and desserts.

[Mocktail tips & recipes ›](#)[Lighter pumpkin pie ›](#)[Roasted squash with wild rice & cranberry ›](#)[Roasted sweet potatoes & brussels sprouts ›](#)[Yam purée ›](#)

Quick tips for holiday stress

Uncle saying wild things at dinner again this year? In short YouTube clips, a psychologist demonstrates a simple technique to quickly release stress and recenter. She also shares three touchstones you can return to mentally before and during stress.

[Box breathing to relieve holiday stress ›](#)[3 tips for managing holiday stress ›](#)

Safe holiday travel for kids

Wearing bulky clothes or coats can prevent a seat harness from fitting snugly – so buckle up first, then add coats or blankets over your child. Here are more ways to boost safety in cars, taxis and planes during a stormy week.

[Safe holiday travel for children ›](#)

Updates – COVID-19

State of California respiratory virus data

In its Dec. 19 update, the California Department of Public Health’s [Respiratory Virus Report](#) said COVID-19 activity remains very low statewide, with minimal test positivity, emergency room visits, and hospitalizations.

However, it said seasonal influenza activity is increasing in all California regions, with a notable rise in test positivity among children. Hospitalizations are currently low but are expected to increase. A new H3N2 flu strain (subclade K) is causing an active, early flu season with more cases in some Northern Hemisphere countries.

Wastewater levels

California and Greater Sacramento/Sierra region COVID wastewater levels as of the Dec. 19 report were still “very low.” State and Sierra-Sacramento influenza A levels were low, but “strongly increasing” statewide with a “very strong increase” in Sacramento/Sierra. [See more data ›](#)

Test positivity

For the week ending Dec. 13, statewide COVID test positivity was “very low” at 1.09%, static from the last newsletter. Greater Sacramento/Sierra region levels were also “very low” at 1.47%. California and Sacramento area influenza A levels were low but increasing, at 7.82% and 5.57% respectively. [See more data ›](#)

Hospitalizations

The COVID-associated hospital admission rate per 100,000 was “very low” at 0.70 statewide and 0.84 in the Greater Sacramento/Sierra region. For influenza, rates were “low” at 1.03 statewide and 1.10 in Sacramento/Sierra. [See more data ›](#)

COVID and flu shots available

UC Davis Health is offering this winter’s updated 2025-26 COVID and flu vaccinations, following California Department of Public Health guidelines. Patients can schedule an appointment on [MyUCDavisHealth](#), or by calling their clinic. For COVID, we offer the Moderna vaccine. For more background, see our [COVID shot page](#) or [flu shot page](#).

Government respiratory virus resources

COVID-19 vaccine rules and advice from different levels of government may be actively changing. This may mean that some information on the pages below, and on other government health websites, may not be up to date (or may conflict).

- [Public Health For All vaccines page](#) (State of California)
- [Immunizations for Respiratory Viruses Prevention](#) (federal government)
- [COVID vaccine scheduling](#) (UC Davis Health)
- [Flu vaccine scheduling](#) (UC Davis Health)
- [COVID & flu tests & treatments \(“I’m Feeling Sick” resource page\)](#) (State of California)
- [Info on at-home COVID treatments](#) (UC Davis Health)

*Other data disclaimers

The hospitalization and wastewater data regularly shared in this newsletter is the most recent available on government websites as of the date of newsletter publication. That weekly data typically lags several days behind the date of the newsletter itself.

Numbers reported by CDC and CDPH web pages may differ. For example, agencies may incorporate different scoring systems, data sets or data points.

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