

5 Ways to Save a Life This Holiday Season

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Remember back in the spring when we heralded our health care workers who so bravely faced this new enemy known as COVID-19?

As a nation, we recognized their sacrifices. We cheered them. We fed them. We made them masks. We held up signs with messages of support.

For eight months, those workers have continued to help **us**. They have literally put their lives on the line to care for and comfort us. To heal us. And to save us.

Now, more than ever, they need our help. The COVID-19 cases here in the Midwest and throughout the country are rising. Our hospitals are approaching dangerous levels where the number of patients is close to exceeding the ability to care for them. Recently, **more than 1 million new cases** of COVID were diagnosed across the country in **less than one week**.

The solution is not as simple as magically creating more beds or extra space. It boils down to having the staff to care for all patients, whether or not they have COVID-19.

The same can be said for our first-responders, teachers, grocery workers, restaurant workers, government workers and business owners. They are all doing their best every day to help us, teach us, feed us and provide us with supplies and services.

Now it's our turn. **We have to double our efforts to help all of them, and ourselves, by not getting sick or spreading the disease.** The solutions are not hard. And we won't have to do them forever.

By taking **5 simple steps**, you can save a life this holiday season, including your own. To do that, you can:



1. **Wear a mask.**
2. **Wash your hands** frequently for at least 20 seconds. You have no idea who touched a surface before you, and whether they are sick.
3. **Practice physical distancing indoors and out.** Stay at least 6 feet apart.
4. **Limit gathering sizes** to the smallest number possible. It's tempting to gather the whole family for these important holidays. This year, consider doing it another way. Use technology to connect. Or send a thoughtful card or letter instead for Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and other December holidays.
5. **Take precautions every day.** Treat everyone – including yourself – as a possible carrier. Many cases of COVID have been diagnosed in people who didn't show symptoms. You may think your family members or close friends are safe because you know them, and *you think* they are being careful. But often, you don't know who THEY have been around and how safe those other people are.

It's up to each of us to do the right thing. COVID is real. And so are the risks to ourselves, our families, our health care workers, first responders and others.

So please! Follow these 5 steps. Listen to the medical professionals and local officials who are providing important guidance. Help your neighbors or friends who need it. And take care of yourself. Your life is worth it!

