

How to have a safe Thanksgiving

Because just about everything that involves a traditional Thanksgiving meal creates a perfect storm to spread the virus that causes covid-19, health experts are encouraging people to scale back holiday gatherings to just those in their immediate household, or to practice what epidemiologists call "harm reduction" if they choose to gather.

That poses the question, "If we're going to celebrate the holiday... how can we make it as safe as possible?" Brian Resnick writes for Vox.

Resnick poses questions that offer options to help reduce the risk of spreading the virus, with the recommendation to initiate several of these strategies at the same time, instead of just one. Here are his questions, and answers; in some cases, you will have to provide your own answers:

1. Can the holiday be held remotely? "Celebrating virtually or with members of your own household (who are consistently taking measures to reduce the spread of covid-19) poses the lowest risk for spread," says the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Thanksgiving guidance.

2. Can Thanksgiving be held outdoors? Resnick notes that while an outdoor gathering is far safer than indoor one, it's important to remember that this strategy isn't foolproof, and people still need to socially distance and wear a mask.

3. Can it be a very small gathering? Know this, he writes: The more people you include, the more dangerous it will be.

4. If it's indoors, can it be well ventilated? Open windows, use fans in some windows to remove old air and in others to introduce new air. Run a HEPA air purifier if you have one. Still, he writes, "We can't ventilate and air-purify our way out of the need to wear masks, reduce occupancy in indoor spaces and physically distance."

5. Can it be quick? Yes, and the longer you spend with an infected person, the more likely the virus is to be transmitted.

6. Does there really need to be food? If the goal is to bring family together, can you perhaps have Thanksgiving without a sit-down meal that necessitates the removal of masks and encourages heavy mouth-breathing

activities like shouting, he asks.

7. Can guests quarantine beforehand? And maybe afterward, Resnick adds.

8. Will vulnerable people be in attendance? Consider excluding those at high risk, such as older people and those with underlying conditions like diabetes and heart disease.

9. Can the number of people traveling from hot-spot regions be reduced?

10. Is everyone attending on the same page in terms of masking and personal risk? For example, families should ask one another, "How often do you wear a mask, and where?"

11. Is everyone in attendance willing to be transparent and honest if they do get sick? Resnick writes, "It's how we can prevent an outbreak in one family from becoming a huge cluster."

Resnick says the overarching question is: "Can you live with a scenario where someone — or many people — at the gathering get covid-19?"

Julia Marcus, a Harvard University epidemiologist, told Resnick that it's important to think hard about what really matters most to you: "What can I live with here? And can I live with not having a traditional Thanksgiving?"

And there's another question that some are asking: How about we gather after we all get tested? That may sound like a good idea, but it has too many pitfalls to rely on, Christie Aschwanden writes for Wired.

"As a means of eliminating risk in the midst of a pandemic, the everyone-has-gotten-tested method is utterly absurd," writes Aschwanden, an award-winning science journalist. "A negative test doesn't guarantee that anyone is covid-free, and it's never license to let down your guard. You might, for instance, contract the virus in the interim between being tested and receiving your results, or between getting your results and seeing your friends and family. (The testing site itself could even be where that happens.)"

"The tests are not 100 percent accurate. In practice, their error rates may be even higher than the chance that you're infected in the first place. The probability that you'll receive a wrong result on any medical test depends not just on the test's innate accuracy but

on your baseline risk. Even a very good test will turn out more false positives than real ones if you go in as someone who isn't likely to have the disease. Conversely, getting a negative result won't give you that much information you didn't have before. It might only increase your confidence at the margins, say from 95 to 98 percent, that you're not already sick."

That said, tests can be part of a multifaceted preventive approach.

For The Conversation, a nonprofit that offers research-based journalism from academics, American University epidemiologist Melissa Hawkins writes that her family's plans for the holiday include testing, less travel and fewer people.

She says instead of their usual pilgrimage to Florida, along with both grandparents, to celebrate with all of the cousins, this year her family will stay home and keep their gathering "small and flexible."

She suggested that people headed to a gathering should agree to be vigilant in their public-health practices beforehand, especially if grandparents and older guests will be in attendance. She said her family has agreed to limit contacts with people as much as possible the week before the holiday, including the few people they see regularly.

In conjunction, everyone coming to her house has agreed to get a laboratory based, "gold-standard" PCR test within 72 hours of Thanksgiving, to allow time to get the results back. She added that if need be, they will get rap-

id test, but noted that this is a second choice because they are less reliable.

She said her family will have a short, outdoor Thanksgiving with a small group in a space that allows plenty of space between them, and she will provide individual "care packages" that allow everyone to have their own blanket, hand sanitizer, utensils and mask. If the weather doesn't cooperate, Plan B involves lots of open windows, exhaust fans and air purifiers, and everyone spread out to eat.

And whether inside or out, she writes that everyone will wear masks when they aren't eating, and social distance. She also notes it's important to be mindful of alcohol consumption, since it lowers inhibitions.

The Kentucky Department for Public Health has issued guidance for celebrating Thanksgiving to prevent the spread of the virus.

This guidance says anyone with an active case of the coronavirus, anyone with symptoms of the virus, anyone waiting for test results, anyone who may have been exposed to someone with the virus in the last 14 days and anyone who is at an increased risk of severe illness from the virus should "not host or participate in any in-person festivities."

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Parsley is native to Southern Europe. Cultivated for more than 2,000 years, it was used medicinally and also as food. The ancient Greeks held it to be sacred, using it to adorn athletic champions and to decorate the tombs of the dead. Ancient Romans used it in cooking, and Charlemagne grew it on his estates. Fool's parsley, a poisonous weed, is sometimes mistaken for the edible flat-leaf parsley.

- Brenda Weaver
Source: www.whfoods.com

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Needle Exchange

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He said the ambulance staff still runs into used needles.

He said with the needle exchange program, the needles may have been used once, maybe twice, unlike being used time and time again in the past.

Toys for Children

Applications are now being accepted for American Legion Toys for Children (ages 0-16) at Webbs Rentals, 721 River Drive and Catherine's Auction House, 389 Richmond Road.

Bring Estill ID and proof of child custody. FMI, call 606-614-5592.

Corona Virus

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The service has a staff of 40, but Wise said not one of them has tested positive for corona virus.

He said the trucks and station are cleaned thoroughly. The staff is using a lot of PPE.

Wise said the service has masks to be given to patients, but he said the 911 dispatchers are now asking that everyone in a residence mask up before the ambulance arrives.

He commended all the agencies which work together, including fire departments, law enforcement and rescue squads.

Fiscal court meets via teleconference

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A resolution was passed affirming Wood Cemetery Road in the Harris Ferry area of the county as a county road. The road has been in the county road system since 1954.

A resolution was passed affirming the affiliation of the Estill County Rescue Squad through 2021. The resolution lists the duties of the rescue squad.

The rescue squad becomes the lead agency during drownings and search and rescues.

Riddell also reported

on Weather Underground app. Its primary focus is incidents with weapons at the army depot.

Fire Chief Derrick Muncie reported on fire runs for the 4th quarter. He said last year, the department made 370 runs, about one a day.

He predicts this year, the runs will finish ahead of that number.

He said the fire department stopped training, then did it online. He added the state has reduced the number of hours of training because of the covid.

"This year has been

unique," stated Jimmie Wise, director of Estill County EMS.

As of Monday, the ambulance service has made 3,375 runs.

They've had to cut back on their training also as well as community and hospital classes.

In the past, EMS taught CPR classes.

The fiscal court approved the sale of surplus property through govdeals.com.

Judge Watson said the county began using that site during a previous administration.

The county gets back

the entire bid price of an item, while the buyer pays a 12.5 percent buyer fee.

Among the surplus items are some storage tanks that were to have been used with a bio-diesel project.

"Those tanks will probably bring a pretty good price," Watson stated.

Zena Melton, a volunteer at the Estill County Animal Shelter, was hired to work part-time at \$9 an hour.

Watson said that she will clean the shelter and feed the animals on weekends.

Police Activity Report

An Estill County arrest warrant was served on **April Goosey**, 42, Court Street, Irvine on Oct. 11 by Detective Steve Hensley.

The warrant was for an alleged probation violation on a felony offense.

Officer Jason Conrad served an Estill County warrant on **Aaron Phillip Riddell**, 38, of Pea Ridge Road, Irvine on November 10. The warrant was issued because of alleged non-payment of court costs, fees, or fines.

An Estill County indictment warrant was executed by Officer

James Marshall Nov. 12 on **Troy James Moore**, 46, of Kirkland Ave., Irvine. Moore was charged by indictment with first degree criminal abuse of a child 12 and under, fourth degree assault (domestic violence) no visible injury, and third degree terroristic threatening.

An Estill County indictment warrant was executed by Officer Marshall Nov. 12 on **Jacob Harrison**, 28, of N. Madison Ave., Irvine. Harrison was indicted for third degree assault (officer transporting inmates).

Timothy Riddell was served Nov. 13 with an indictment warrant by Officer Marshall. Riddell was indicted for second degree assault, fourth degree assault (domestic violence) no visible injury, and persistent felony offender.

Officer Stewart Morris arrested **Jacqueline Newton**, 44, of Hopkins, South Carolina on Stacy Lane, Nov. 13. He served four warrants from Lee County on Newton for failure to appear in court.

Officer Marshall executed a bench warrant on

Thomas Ray McKinney, 31 of Lincoln Avenue, Irvine. The Estill Circuit Court warrant was for an alleged probation violation.

Officer Marshall served two bench warrants Nov. 15 on **Joseph Tyler Noland**, 31, of Sunrise Valley Road, Irvine. The e-warrants were for failure to appear in Estill District Court.

An Estill County warrant was served on **David Mullins**, 47, of N. Plum Street, Irvine on Nov. 13. The citation stated that Mullins had failed to appear in court.

Drive by to see Santa Nov. 28 on Collins St.

Santa and his elves are planning another Drive by Santa event from 10:00 am to 1:00 p.m. on November 28, 2020 on Collins Street between Irvine Fire Department and Back Street Grub.

Just as we did on June 25, 2020, as vehicle drives by and stops on west side of Collins Street, the Back Street Grub Restaurant side, Mrs. Claus, the Elves and Santa will give each child in vehicle a stuffed

animal and the Back Street Grub Team will give each child some of their special items.

The stuffed animals will be from Plaza Pharmacy and Meade's and the North Pole.

All of us who will be giving the young folks things will be wearing masks or face shields and gloves and we shall have items to extend our reach to be physically distant as is required currently.