

## Sharing living space during COVID-19 [descriptive transcript]

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The risk of getting and spreading COVID-19 raises many questions about allowing others into your living space.

The safest course of action is not to allow visitors or guests into your living space.

Whether you live on campus or off campus, by yourself or with housemates, think carefully about how you want to approach having other people in your space this year.

Where you once may have had an open door policy...

[Image of female student welcoming three other students into her room.]

Now, deciding who comes into your space requires significant thought and consideration for you and those who share your space.

[Image of the same female student scratching her head and frowning.]

Do you plan to have people over?

Stopping by for a few minutes, or spending the night?

Hanging out indoors, or outdoors?

If you've answered those questions and want to allow others in your space...

...how do your roommates or housemates feel about it?

Do any of them have underlying conditions that increase their vulnerability to COVID-19?

[Black circle pops up with writing inside it.]

Are you sure you know this? They may have underlying conditions that are not visible.

[Another black circle pops up with writing inside it.]

Or they may be closely connected to someone with serious health risks.

If you are thinking about having people over to hang out, or if you are thinking that you shouldn't, it's important to discuss your preferences and come to an agreement with your roommates or housemates.

Even good friends can have different ideas about how risky it might be to have people over...

...and perhaps different ideas about whether it's worth taking those risks.

Consider the situation these off-campus housemates find themselves in:

[Image of housemate texting on her phone. A white bubble shows an image of another woman, also texting.]

[A black circle pops up with writing in it. It is the housemate's side of the texting conversation.]

Yes! I'm so glad you can come up here next weekend!  
You can totally stay with me.

[Yellow bubble pops up, displaying the other side of the text conversation.]

Do you want to check with your roommates?

[Black circle appears with writing in it.]

Nah, Thea thinks you're awesome.  
So does Emma.

[Yellow bubble pops up.]

Are you certain?

[Black circle appears.]

I'm sure it's fine.

[Texting ends and housemate puts away her phone. A white thought cloud appears.]

Emma and Thea are going to be so excited to see Jane again! Besides, she's been careful about this COVID-thing. I'm sure they won't mind.

[Image of housemate standing as second housemate enters the room, walking while texting.]

Guess who's going to stay with us next weekend?!

Jane!

[Second housemate's mouth opens in shock.]

[Image of second housemate sitting on her bed, looking distressed. A white thought cloud appears.]

Jane is great, but I don't want to be around her. I have no idea who she's been around or how much COVID there is at her school. I really don't like this idea.

[Image of third housemate in her bedroom, looking angry. First housemate hangs her head.]

You invited Jane to stay with us?!

[Image of third housemate alone in her room, stomping her foot angrily. Second housemate enters the room. A conversation bubble appears by third roommate.]

I can't believe Zoe invited her for the weekend. Doesn't she know that my dad is sick? If I get exposed, I can't see him.

[A conversation bubble appears by second housemate.]

I think we need to talk to her.

[Image of all three roommates standing in the living room. None look happy. A conversation bubble appears by second roommate.]

We thought more about this, and we're not comfortable with Jane coming.

[A conversation bubble appears by first roommate.]

What do you mean, you don't like Jane?

[A conversation bubble appears by third roommate.]

It's not about Jane. We like Jane. But my dad is sick. I can't risk being exposed to COVID-19.

[A conversation bubble appears by first roommate.]

Oh. I hadn't thought about that.

[A conversation bubble appears by first roommate.]

I'll call Jane and let her know.

[A conversation bubble appears by third roommate.]

Thanks for understanding.

[A conversation bubble appears by first roommate.]

Yeah. Okay.

Clearly these housemates have different ideas about how to share their space.

It's best if you have these conversations in advance to avoid potential conflict, as well as potential risk of spreading the virus.

It's a good idea for people who live together to talk about their own risk calculations and their comfort level with people in the space.

It can be helpful to write out an agreement, or at least a list of questions to discuss with each other.

**Here are some questions you might consider:**

If people come over, should they be expected to wear masks inside? Maintain physical distance?

Could friends visit in bedrooms?

Could friends visit in common rooms?

What if you consider a friend to be "in your bubble," but your housemate might not view them as being in theirs?

If living off-campus, are you all in agreement not to have visitors from out of town?

(Visitors are not allowed on campus or in university housing.)

It's also important to remember that it can be easy to underestimate risks. Or, to decide that whatever the risks are, they are simply "worth it" to you.

And certainly everyone has legitimate needs for friendship and fun.

But not everyone thinks about the potential risks and benefits in the same way.  
So it's important to talk about it!

### **So what else could this look like?**

[Image of three male students sitting in a living room. First housemate is typing on his laptop. A conversation bubble appears.]

Do you guys care if I have some friends over later?

[A conversation bubble appears by second housemate.]

Well, like, what do you mean? In here? I guess so, but are they going to wear masks?

[A conversation bubble appears by first housemate.]

Seriously? I mean, these are my friends. They don't have COVID.

[A conversation bubble appears by third housemate, who is sitting with his arms crossed.]

Dude! Anybody can have it. I'm not going to wear a mask all day and then have some random guy come over and spew all over me. No. Hang out on the porch with them or meet them somewhere else.

[A conversation bubble appear by first housemate.]

Okay, okay, lighten up. I won't bring them inside.

[A conversation bubble appears by second housemate.]

Uh, well, what about Emma? Can she spend the night?

[A conversation bubble appears by third housemate.]

You guys are together, so I guess that's better. But honestly I think you guys should just hang out in your room.

[Another conversation bubble appears by third housemate.]

She can use the bathroom, but don't hang out in here. No offense, but with my asthma I can't mess around.

[A conversation bubble appears by second housemate.]

Okay, I can work with that.

Coming to an agreement about having other people in your space is important.  
But you could...

[Image of two people walking in a park, wearing masks and maintaining physical distancing.]  
Consider meeting for a walk or a chat outside.  
(The Botanic Gardens is great for a stroll.)

[Image of building with large steps leading up to it. A student sits on the top step and waves to a student jumping and waving from the bottom step.]  
Catch up on a porch or in an outdoor quad.

[Image of grassy area looking at buildings in the distance. Some buildings are gothic style and others modern. Two students are sitting on the grass with a pizza. Two other students walk over, wearing masks and carrying a bag of food.]  
Grab a meal to go and enjoy it on the Slope.

[Image of room. One student sits in a chair by the window, wearing a mask. Another student sits on the couch on the other side of the room, wearing a mask.]  
If you must be indoors, socialize in a spacious room, wear a mask, and physically distance.

### **Living with others means thinking of others.**

Discuss your concerns.

Come to an agreement with your roommates.

Explore new and safer ways to socialize.

### **What are the questions you want to ask?**

Brought to you by the Skorton Center for Health Initiatives @ Cornell Health.

[Image of Cornell University seal appears in lower left corner.]