

## **Holiday Safety Video**

### **An Interview with Infection Preventionist Susan Haden**

**Robert Brauchle speaking:** The holiday season is traditionally a time we dedicate to visiting friends and family. This year, however, is going to look a little different because of COVID-19.

My name is Robert Brauchle, from HII Corporate Communications, and I recently spoke with Susan Haden, an Infection Preventionist at Riverside Health System's Walter Reed Hospital, in Gloucester, Va., about how to keep yourself and your family safe this holiday season.

**Susan Haden speaking:** COVID-19 is something we've never dealt with. People need to take it very seriously. There are things the CDC and the Virginia Department of Health have recommended to keep us safe.

Some people think they are healthy, they are young and they don't take the threat serious, and we need to be responsible as individuals to protect ourselves, protect our families as well – and our coworkers. COVID-19 is not restricted to the elderly; it is not restricted to certain populations. COVID-19 can impact everyone's lives, and no one is immune to COVID-19 at this point.

The flu season has also hit; we're starting to see some cases on flu, so making sure you get your influenza vaccination is very important.

There have been cases already this year of people who had COVID-19 and flu. And that's a challenge to treat because two viruses can make people very, very sick.

People have pandemic fatigue – they're tired of wearing masks, they're tired of social distancing. They want things to return to the way we had them before, and it's not safe for us to do that at this point.

People need to continue wearing their masks, covering their nose and mouth, and wash their hands frequently.

The social distance one is the toughest, especially this time of year, approaching the holidays. People seem to think that they can take their mask down when they're around their coworkers or supervisors, or when their parent isn't watching. But that puts that person at risk as well as the other person they are in close proximity to.

People can be contagious when they are positive without showing symptoms. That can give us a false sense of security as well. And we have to be smarter and be safer this year.

One thing you can consider is having small meals with people who live in your household and are in contact with day-to-day. Travel is a significant risk because you're around people in different locations that you're not normally exposed to.

If there's a high prevalence of COVID-19 in certain areas, you could put yourself at higher risk. The other thing people don't consider is, when you take your mask off to eat, even though they might be a

## Video Transcript

grandparent or someone who stayed home or hasn't really been social, you could still expose that person, bringing something to them without developing symptoms. You might not even know you have COVID-19 that you could spread and threaten someone else.

The recommendations on the CDC website are very specific. They give a lot of guidelines and ideas on ways for people to be creative this holiday season.

People who choose and who have to have a holiday meal with other people, they must put in place specific precautions. For example, they recommend people bring their own food and beverage; sit at their own table and if the weather permits, having the event outside instead of inside or in a well-ventilated area.

If you do have multiple households coming to one event, you set the ground rules upfront to say that when you arrive, I expect you to wear a mask. If you don't have one, I'll have one at the door for you. Have hand sanitizer available and frequently clean surfaces. Use disposable utensils, and like I said, sit different households at tables at least 6-feet away from each other.

**Robert Brauchle speaking:** I want thank Susan for those helpful tips. Now, for more information on how to stay safe this holiday season, you can visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

You can also find other health-related resources at [HuntingtonIngalls.com](https://www.huntingtoningalls.com).

And share your ideas for staying safe by emailing them to [HII\\_Communications@hii-co.com](mailto:HII_Communications@hii-co.com).