

Eat This, Not That!

7 Places You're Most Likely to Catch Omicron

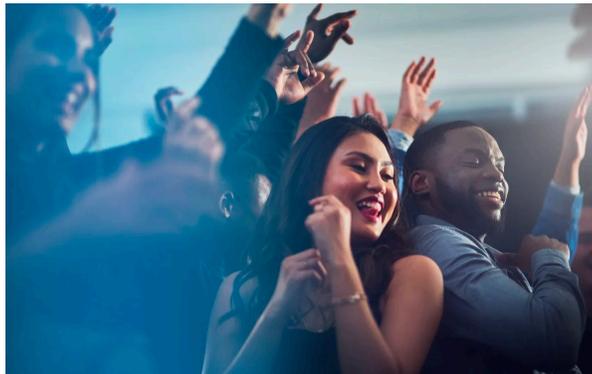
Heather Newgen | January 29, 2022



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As Omicron spreads rapidly across the U.S. and millions of Americans have caught the contagious virus, it seems like there's no safe way to avoid the COVID variant. While we all have pandemic fatigue, staying vigilant and taking precautions is key to helping prevent Omicron. *Eat This, Not That!* Health talked to experts who revealed the seven places you're most likely to get Omicron and where to avoid if possible. Read on—and to ensure your health and the health of others, don't miss these Sure Signs You've Already Had COVID.

1. Confined Indoor Spaces



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Infectious disease expert and pioneering scientific researcher **Dr. Serhat** says, "Given the severity of the highly contagious Omicron variant, I would strongly advise avoiding confined indoor spaces where people are in close proximity to each other such as nightclubs, house

parties, and family gatherings. Any indoor space, especially those with inadequate ventilation, where people are not wearing masks or practicing social distancing could turn out to be a breeding ground for Omicron. With Omicron being so widespread, even those who are vaccinated are still at risk of contracting it. Fortunately, however, many are experiencing mild symptoms such as colds, coughs, headaches and fevers—with many confusing it with symptoms commonly associated with the seasonal flu."

2. Indoor Gyms



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Dr. Bradley Katz, MD, Ph.D., a professor at the University of Utah Medical Center states, "Exercise causes us to breathe harder and so we are more likely to exhale more air and any virus droplets that may be in our breath. If the gym is under-ventilated as well, these droplets are hanging in the air. This increases the likelihood of the droplets being inhaled by another person in the gym."

3. Grocery Stores



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Dr. Kristina Hendija says, "Access to basic necessities is the first thing people swarm to whenever there is an expected lockdown or closure of shops. Do not succumb to panic and impulse buying because the risk of contracting COVID is high in places with a high volume of people."

4. Public Transportation



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According to Dr. Hendija, "COVID is airborne, and studies have shown that even if an infectious person has already left, the virus remains in suspension for 15 minutes and can still be inhaled by new passengers."

5. Hospitals



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Dr. Hendija, reminds us, "Unless you have a medical emergency, avoid going to hospitals for outpatient concerns because of two main reasons. First, the hospital is already burdened with

the influx of moderate to severe COVID patients and second, you are more likely to encounter a person with COVID at a hospital since it is where they are admitted."

6. Air Travel



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"Flights pose a two to three fold risk to contracting the omicron variant. The reasons are: although the air filtration systems on planes are very efficient, the number of travelers are increasing as people resume their lives. Every passenger becomes a potential carrier of the virus. The safest seats on a plane are those in business class where it is less crowded and less likely to touch a contaminated surface or be exposed to unmasked passengers as they eat," reports a pharmacist for the Farr Institute.

7. Large Gatherings



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"Large gatherings such as parties, concerts, pubs, etc especially if they are indoors. People are characteristically relaxed at these types of events and can let down their guard. Hugging, kissing are all common behaviors at large gatherings. Indoor restaurants pose a risk because of being

indoors, touching contaminated objects, people eating without masks. Laughing, coughing may spread contaminated droplets into the air," says the pharmacist.

8. How to Stay Safe Out There



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Follow the public health fundamentals and help end this pandemic, no matter where you live—get vaccinated or boosted ASAP; if you live in an area with low vaccination rates, wear an N95 face mask, don't travel, social distance, avoid large crowds, don't go indoors with people you're not sheltering with (especially in bars), practice good hand hygiene, and to protect your life and the lives of others, don't visit any of these 35 Places You're Most Likely to Catch COVID.

<https://www.eatthis.com/news-places-omicron-high-risk/>