

“That’s what will change the rate of mortality going forward”

- Dr. Deborah Bix on Americans changing their behavior

Will changing behaviors make us safer? A COVID-19 Data Project by IDS International

To help us make better decisions on the COVID-19 crisis, [IDS International](#) has created a consortia of data and tech companies to measure the effectiveness of physical distancing and disinfectant behaviors like hand-washing and masks. Our initial survey¹ on behaviors, undertaken with consortia partner [Clear Outcomes](#), focuses on how well Americans are following behavior guidelines. Are we wearing masks, washing our hands, wiping down packages? Why do we go out?

Washing hands

We are doing well at washing our hands. Over 60% of Americans surveyed said they thoroughly wash their hands (with soap for more than 20 seconds) more than 5 times a day and almost 90% of people are washing at least 3 times a day.



Social Distancing

We’re not so great at staying apart; 75% of Americans surveyed had contact with some new people in the past five days and 38% had contact with at least 3 different new people.



Those of us staying at home without outside contact are most likely to have a household income of \$10,000 or less or an income of \$75,000 or more.

Wearing masks

Americans are picking up on mask wearing, just one day after the CDC recommendation to wear cloth masks outside the home, over half of Americans reported wearing a mask outside the house. Over 41% of Americans surveyed said that they “usually” or “always” wear a mask, while 42% said they “rarely” or “never” wear a mask.

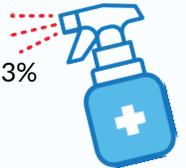
when leaving the house
in the past
5 days



Who is doing it? There was no significant difference in who is wearing a mask or wiping down groceries by age, sex, or income. Those of us in the Mid-Atlantic and Pacific regions were most likely to report “always” or “usually” wearing masks outside their homes—Mountain and West North Central region residents were most likely to “rarely” or “never” wear a mask.

Wiping down packages

We’re slower at wiping down packages. Only 53% of us are “usually” or “always” wiping down groceries or delivery boxes. Over 21% of those surveyed “never” wipe down these items.



Why do we go out?

Chiefly we leave our homes for essential activities; 75% of Americans surveyed go out for essential shopping (food, medicine) and 9% for healthcare. However, about 4% of us still leave home for non-essential shopping and 11% go out to visit family or friends (7% and 4%, respectively). Adults under 30 were more likely to go out to visit family (11%) or friends (9%).

On a positive note, adults over 45 are more likely to go out for just a single reason (essential shopping, exercise) rather than for multiple reasons; those over 60 are more likely to not go out at all.

The good news is that about two thirds of us are able to work and study from home to some extent, with 44% solely working and studying at home. However, 33% of us still need to leave our homes for work or school.

Our out-of-home activities differ by gender, income, and age. Men are more likely than women to go out for work and exercise. People with higher incomes are more likely to exercise when they go out.

For more information contact data@idsinternational.com



¹ There were 1,333 respondents drawn from a geographic, age, sex and income balanced pool of US respondents on 6 April 2020 (95% confidence interval, 3% margin of error).