

# Cruising Tips

Each year millions of U.S. citizens enjoy cruise vacations. In 2005, approximately 9.8 million passengers embarked from North American ports for their cruise vacation (from [Cruise Lines International Association](#)). Traveling on cruise ships exposes people to new environments and high volumes of people, including other travelers. Although an infrequent occurrence, this exposure creates the risk for illness, either from contaminated food, water or more commonly through person to person contact.

Follow these tips to help prevent the spread of illness:

1. Wash your hands!
  - Before and after
    - eating,
    - smoking,
  - After
    - touching your face,
    - going to the bathroom
  - When your hands are dirty.

Learn more about [handwashing techniques](#).

2. Leave the area if you see someone get sick (vomiting or diarrhea).

Report to cruise staff, if not already notified.

You could become sick if you ingest contaminated particles that travel through the air.

3. Take care of yourself.

Get plenty of rest, drink lots of water. Resting helps rebuild your immune system. Drinking water helps prevents dehydration.

4. Be considerate of other people's health.

If you're ill before taking a cruise, call the cruise line to determine if there are alternative cruising options.

Learn more about [viral](#) outbreaks aboard ships.

CDC's Vessel Sanitation Program helps the cruise industry to control and prevent the spread of gastrointestinal illnesses aboard cruise ships and assists them in monitoring ships if they have an outbreak. Learn more about CDC's [Vessel Sanitation Program](#).