

Does weather affect the spread of the coronavirus outside?

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AP Illustration/Peter Hamlin

Does weather affect the spread of the coronavirus outside?

Not really.

The World Health Organization says the virus can be transmitted in any kind of [weather](#) and that there is no reason to believe that [cold weather](#) can kill it.

The U.N. [health](#) agency says the virus is mainly spread between people. Rain and snow might dilute any traces of the virus on benches or other outside objects, but transmission from surfaces is not believed to be a major contributor to the pandemic.

Scientists say the real concern about cold weather is that [lower temperatures](#) are more likely to keep people indoors—potentially in more crowded spaces where the virus can spread more easily.

Studies have shown that a significant percentage of spread happens within households when people are sharing common areas like kitchens and bathrooms.

WHO and others have also warned that in indoor spaces with poor ventilation, transmission happens more easily because the virus can be spread in the air and infectious particles might remain suspended in the air for several hours.

Superspreader events have been traced to nightclubs, gyms and even choir practices. The coronavirus does not transmit as often outdoors because fresh air disperses the [virus particles](#) and people are more easily able to keep their distance from others. But experts caution that if people spend extended periods of time outdoors close to others without wearing masks, coronavirus spread is still possible.

Health officials say the best way to stop transmission of the [virus](#) is to wear a mask in public, stay at least 6 feet (2 meters) away from people not in your household and frequently wash your hands.

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