

COVID-19 & Apartment Buildings – Should I Take the Elevator or the Stairs?

Article By:

Richard P. Console, Jr.

The COVID-19 pandemic has completely altered the way of life for most people in this country. Most of us have been under some sort of quarantine or stay at home order over the last few months, but the economy has slowly started to open up. Now, as more people begin to venture outside of their homes and resume some of their daily activities, it is important to understand that there are still safety risks. What is safe to do, and what should be avoided? If you live in an apartment complex, social distancing can be difficult.

If There are People in the Elevator Should I Take It?

Anyone who uses an elevator knows that there is no way to socially distance appropriately inside of one. Authorities in both New Jersey and New York have [recommended the number of people](#) getting into an elevator should be limited to avoid crowding. People should only consider riding in an elevator with their own party. If that is not possible, or if you are uncomfortable riding with anyone else, you should wait for the next elevator or take the stairs if you are able.

Even if you do decide to take an elevator with your own party or if you are the only one in the elevator, please remember that these are enclosed environments that may not have good air circulation. If somebody with COVID-19 rode the elevator recently, the virus could still be in the air. Also remember that the virus can remain on surfaces for a lengthy period of time, and everybody getting in the elevator has hit one of the buttons. You should consider wearing gloves if you know you will be pressing elevator buttons, and take any precautionary measures to limit exposure to frequently touched items like elevator buttons.

Can I Use Common Areas Like Pools & Gyms of a Building?

Right now, there is no evidence that COVID-19 can be spread to humans through [pools or hot tubs](#). If apartment complexes take care to properly operate, maintain, and disinfect pools and hot tubs, this should remove or inactivate the virus that causes COVID-19.

However, apartment complex gyms and other common areas may be more difficult to properly clean and disinfect regularly. If an apartment does have a gym that is open, proper social distancing measures need to be implemented, and you should properly clean every piece of equipment before

and after you use it.

Regardless of what area of the apartment you are going to be in, please remember that this virus can spread from person to person fairly easily, so you should limit any situation in which you will be exposed to multiple people who are not of your household.

Will You Be Notified If Someone in Your Apartment Complex Has COVID-19?

If there is somebody in your apartment complex that has tested positive for COVID-19, you will likely not know. Property managers and other occupants of an apartment are under no obligation to notify the local government or others inside of the building if there is a COVID-19 case reported. Right now, residents of New Jersey who live in apartment complexes need to understand that a trademark of COVID-19 is that there is widespread community transmission. You should go about your daily lives as if the people around you, and yourself, are at risk of transmitting the virus. Some estimates say that as much as 25% of people who have COVID-19 have no symptoms at all and do not know they have the virus.

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