When will it be safe to...?

Coronavirus pandemic

Opinions differ widely on when it is safe to restart activities like working out at the gym, or going on vacation.

Senior Health Correspondent Joyce Teo senses what 15 experts and healthcare workers think.

Even as coronavirus restrictions slowly ease down, phases of reopening Hong Kong and Malaysia, as well as the resumptions of non-essential services, have led to discussions on when it might be safe to relax restrictions as coronavirus cases die down in these countries. The experts, however, say that they can only provide a general consensus on these matters.

The novel coronavirus pandemic started to spread out of China in February this year, and experts agree that the number of infections is not the only factor to consider when deciding if some activities can be safely resumed.

When can we return to the gym?

Saying no to the idea of going to the gym is not an option for many, but experts say they can only provide a general sentiment. People cannot suddenly just stop going to the gym without punishment, but experts suggest that people can go back to gym after the lockdown is lifted.

When are we going to be able to travel?

People will need to wait until the pandemic is over. Experts say a vaccine may not be available until next year, and travel restrictions are likely to continue for some time. However, they say it is important to start planning for travel so that people can be prepared when the time comes.

When can we return to our jobs?

A return to the workplace could be a possibility. Experts say that people should be prepared to work in a new normal setting, but they do not expect a complete return to pre-COVID-19 conditions. A gradual return to work is likely to be the norm.

When can we see out friends?

Social distancing is likely to continue for some time, but experts say that people can start planning for a gradual return to normalcy. They suggest that people should continue to follow the guidelines put in place by health authorities.

When can we return to the classroom?

The return to the classroom is likely to be dependent on the rate of vaccination and the effectiveness of the vaccine. Experts say that schools may be able to reopen in the fall of 2021, but they caution that it is important to continue to follow the guidelines put in place by health authorities.

When can we return to the workplace?

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