

What is coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a new coronavirus that has spread throughout the world. COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild (or no symptoms) to severe illness.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported, ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Sore throat
- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Runny nose or stuffy nose
- Fatigue
- Recent loss of taste or smell
- Poor feeding or poor appetite (infants and children)

Children have similar symptoms to adults and generally have mild illness.

How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly from person to person through respiratory droplets produced when a person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. Spread is more likely when people are in close contact with one another (within about six feet).

It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes. However, this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

What are severe complications from this virus?

Some patients have pneumonia in both lungs, multi-organ failure and in some cases death.

How can I help protect myself?

People can help protect themselves from respiratory illness with everyday preventive actions.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick, even inside your home.
- Put six feet of distance between yourself and other people outside of your home.
- Do not gather in groups.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

What should I do if I have symptoms of COVID-19?

Please monitor your symptoms and contact your healthcare provider, who will be able to help you get tested, if necessary. Most people experience mild illness and are able to recover at home.

- Stay at home when you are sick.
- While at home, separate yourself from other people as much as possible.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Wear a face mask or cloth face covering when around other people or animals. (A cloth face covering is a material that covers the nose and mouth. It could be sewn by hand or improvised from household items such as scarves, T-shirts, or bandanas.)
- Wash your hands often.
- Clean and disinfect frequently-touched objects and surfaces in your household.

Is there a vaccine?

There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to take everyday preventive actions, like avoiding close contact with people who are sick and washing your hands often.

Is there a treatment?

There is no specific antiviral treatment for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 can seek medical care to help relieve symptoms.

