

# Coronavirus Disease (Covid-19) Health and Safety Information

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an illness caused by a virus 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. Researchers are working around the clock to discover a vaccine or a cure for this virus.

The virus causing coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), is not the same as the coronaviruses that commonly circulate among humans and cause mild illness, like the common cold. Why is the disease being called coronavirus disease 2019, COVID-19? On February 11, 2020 the World Health Organization announced an official name for the disease that is causing the 2019 novel coronavirus outbreak, first identified in Wuhan China. The new name of this disease is coronavirus disease 2019, abbreviated as COVID-19. Formerly, this disease was referred to as “2019 novel coronavirus” or “2019-nCoV”. There are many types of human coronaviruses including some that commonly cause mild upper-respiratory tract illnesses. COVID-19 is a new disease, caused by a novel (or new) coronavirus that has not previously been seen in humans.

COVID-19 affects different people in different ways. Infected people have had a wide range of symptoms reported – 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:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

\*This list does not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19.

## When to Seek Emergency Medical Attention

Look for **emergency warning signs\*** for COVID-19. If someone is showing any of these signs, **seek emergency medical care immediately**

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

\*This list is not all possible symptoms. Please call your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you. **Call 911 or call ahead to your local emergency facility:** Notify the operator that you are seeking care for yourself or someone who has or may have COVID-19. COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly through close contact from person-to-person. Some people without symptoms may be able to spread the virus. We are still learning about how the virus spreads and the severity of illness it causes.

## The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks.
- These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

**The virus that causes COVID-19 is spreading very easily and sustainably between people.** Information from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic suggests that this virus is spreading more efficiently than influenza, but not as efficiently as measles, which is highly contagious. In general, **the more closely a person interacts with others and the longer that interaction, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spread.**

The virus may be spread in other ways. 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. This is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads, but we are still learning more about how this virus spreads.

Spread between animals and people

- At this time, the risk of COVID-19 spreading **from animals to people** is considered to be low.
- It appears that the virus that causes COVID-19 can spread **from people to animals** in some situations. CDC is aware of a small number of pets worldwide, including cats and dogs, reported to be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, mostly after close contact with people with COVID-19.

**The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus.** You can take steps to slow the spread by protecting yourself and other.

- Maintain good social distance (about 6 feet). This is very important in preventing the spread.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Routinely clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face covering when around others in public settings.
- Stay home as much as possible and avoid close contact with others
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick, even inside your home. If possible, maintain 6 feet between the person who is sick and other household members.

**Older adults and people who have severe underlying medical conditions** like heart or lung disease or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing serious complications from COVID-19 illness. Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

- The cloth face cover is meant to protect other people in case you are infected.
- Do NOT use a facemask meant for a healthcare worker.
- The cloth face cover is not a substitute for social distancing.
- **If you are around others and do not have on your cloth face covering, remember to always cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow and do not spit.
- **Throw used tissues** in the trash.
- Immediately **wash your hands** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- **Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily.** This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
- **If surfaces are dirty, clean them.** Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- **Then, use a household disinfectant.** Most EPA-registered household disinfectants will work..
- **Be alert for symptoms.** Watch for fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19.

- Especially important if you are running essential errands, going into the office or workplace, and in settings where it may be difficult to keep a physical distance of 6 feet.
- **Take your temperature** if symptoms develop.
  - Don't take your temperature within 30 minutes of exercising or after taking medications that could lower your temperature, like acetaminophen.
- Follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop.

Buy groceries and medicine, go to the doctor, and complete banking activities online when possible. • If you must go in person, stay at least 6 feet away from others and disinfect items you must touch. • Get deliveries and takeout, and limit in-person contact as much as possible.

Prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick • Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care. • Avoid public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis. • Separate yourself from other people and pets in your home. • There is no specific treatment for COVID-19, but you can seek medical care to help relieve your symptoms. • If you need medical attention, call ahead.

### Testing for COVID-19

Two kinds of tests are available for COVID-19: viral tests and antibody tests.

- A viral test tells you if you have a current infection.
- An antibody test might tell you if you had a past infection. An antibody test might not show if you have a current infection because it can take 1–3 weeks after infection for your body to make antibodies. Having antibodies to the virus that causes COVID-19 might provide protection from getting infected with the virus again. If it does, we do not know how much protection the antibodies might provide or how long this protection might last.

If you are caring for someone with COVID-19 at home or in a non-healthcare setting, follow this advice to protect yourself and others. Learn what to do when someone has symptoms of COVID-19 or when someone has been diagnosed with the virus. This information also should be followed when caring for people who have tested positive but are not showing symptoms.

- Help the person who is sick follow their doctor's instructions for care and medicine.
  - For *most* people, symptoms last a few days, and people usually feel better after a week.
- See if over-the-counter medicines for fever help the person feel better.
- Make sure the person who is sick drinks a lot of fluids and rests.
- Help them with grocery shopping, filling prescriptions, and getting other items they may need. Consider having the items delivered through a delivery service, if possible.
- Take care of their pet(s), and limit contact between the person who is sick and their pet(s) when possible.
- Have their doctor's phone number on hand.
- Use CDC's self-checker tool to help you make decisions about seeking appropriate medical care.
- Call their doctor if the person keeps getting sicker. For medical emergencies, call 911 and tell the dispatcher that the person has or might have COVID-19.

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| • Trouble breathing                        | • New confusion                   |
| • Persistent pain or pressure in the chest | • Inability to wake or stay awake |

- Bluish lips or face

\*This list is not all possible symptoms. Please call your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you. **Call 911 or call ahead to your local emergency facility:** Notify the operator that you are seeking care for someone who has or may have COVID-19.

- The **caregiver**, when possible, **should not be someone who is at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19**.
- **If possible, have the person who is sick use a separate bedroom and bathroom.** If possible, have the person who is sick stay in their own “sick room” or area and away from others. Try to stay at least 6 feet away from the sick person.
- **Shared space:** If you have to share space, make sure the room has good air flow.
  - Open the window and turn on a fan (if possible) to increase air circulation.
  - Improving ventilation helps remove respiratory droplets from the air.
- **Avoid having visitors.** Avoid having any unnecessary visitors, especially visits by people who are at higher risk for severe illness.
- **Stay separated:** The person who is sick should eat (or be fed) in their room, if possible.
- **Wash dishes and utensils using gloves and hot water:** Handle any dishes, cups/glasses, or silverware used by the person who is sick with gloves. Wash them with soap and hot water or in a dishwasher.
- Clean hands after taking off gloves or handling used items.
- **Do not share:** Do not share dishes, cups/glasses, silverware, towels, bedding, or electronics (like a cell phone) with the person who is sick.

#### **Sick person:**

- The person who is sick should wear a cloth face covering when they are around other people at home and out (including before they enter a doctor’s office).
- The cloth face covering helps prevent a person who is sick from spreading the virus to others. It keeps respiratory droplets contained and from reaching other people.

#### **Caregiver:**

- Wear gloves when you touch or have contact with the sick person’s blood, stool, or body fluids, such as saliva, mucus, vomit, and urine. Throw out gloves into a lined trash can and wash hands right away.
- The caregiver should ask the sick person to put on a cloth face covering before entering the room.
- The caregiver may also wear a cloth face covering when caring for a person who is sick.
  - To prevent getting sick, make sure you practice everyday preventive actions: clean hands often; avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands; and frequently clean and disinfect surfaces.

**Note:** During the COVID-19 pandemic, medical grade facemasks are reserved for healthcare workers and some first responders. You may need to make a cloth face covering using a scarf or bandana.

- **If you are using a separate bedroom and bathroom:** Only clean the area around the person who is sick when needed, such as when the area is soiled. This will help limit your contact with the sick person.
  - If they feel up to it, the person who is sick can clean their own space. Give the person who is sick **personal cleaning supplies** such as tissues, paper towels, cleaners, and EPA-registered disinfectants external icon.
- **If sharing a bathroom:** The person who is sick should clean and then disinfect after each use. If this is not possible, wear a cloth face covering and wait as long as possible after the sick person has used the bathroom before coming in to clean and use the bathroom.

- Do not shake dirty laundry.
- Wear disposable gloves while handling dirty laundry.
- Dirty laundry from a person who is sick can be washed with other people's items.
- Wash items according to the label instructions. Use the warmest water setting you can.
- Remove gloves, and wash hands right away.
- Dry laundry, on hot if possible, completely.
- Wash hands after putting clothes in the dryer.
- Clean and disinfect clothes hampers. Wash hands afterwards.
- Place used disposable gloves and other contaminated items in a lined trash can.
- Use gloves when removing garbage bags, and handling and disposing of trash. Wash hands afterwards.
- Place all used disposable gloves, facemasks, and other contaminated items in a lined trash can.
- If possible, dedicate a lined trash can for the person who is sick.
- Caregivers should stay home and monitor their health for COVID-19 symptoms while caring for the person who is sick. They should also continue to stay home after care is complete. Caregivers can leave their home 14 days after their last close contact with the person who is sick (based on the time it takes to develop illness), or 14 days after the person who is sick meets the criteria to end home isolation.

**\*\*In all cases, follow the guidance of your doctor and local health department.** The decision to stop home isolation should be made in consultation with their healthcare provider and state and local health departments. Some people, for example those with conditions that weaken their immune system, might continue to spread virus even after they recover.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

\*\*\*This information brought to you by the Zion Canaan Baptist Church Health Ministry.