

## CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)

### FAQs and General Information

#### *How is COVID-19 spread?*

The virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to spread from person-to-person, mainly through respiratory droplets produced when an infected 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 6 feet).

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#How-COVID-19-Spreads>

#### *What are the symptoms of COVID-19?*

COVID-19 can cause a range of disease symptoms, from mild to severe. These symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus, and can include:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

This list does not include all possible symptoms. Other less common symptoms have been reported, including nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

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

#### *How can you reduce your risk of getting COVID-19?*

Because there is no vaccine for COVID-19, it is important that we do all we can to prevent COVID-19 infection and transmission.

The following actions can prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- **Clean hands often:** Washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds is important, especially after a person has spent time in a public place or after blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing. People should also:
  - Avoid touching their faces—especially their eyes, nose, and mouth—with unwashed hands.
  - Wash their hands after touching surfaces that have not been recently disinfected.
  - Use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol when soap and water is not available.

- **Avoid close contact:** Individuals should avoid close contact with people who are sick. Because as many as 1-in-4 people with COVID-19 do not show symptoms, it's important to prevent exposure by physically distancing from others and maintaining at least six feet of space between people (also known as 'social distancing'). People should stay home as much as possible. If a person is still going into work (i.e., they serve as a frontline responder or work in other essential industries), they should not go into work if they feel sick.
- **Cover mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others:** All people should wear a cloth face cover in places where they are not able to practice social distancing (such as grocery stores and pharmacies). The cloth face mask is NOT a substitute for social distancing.
- **Cover coughs and sneezes:** In situations where an individual does not have a cloth face covering, they should cover their mouth and nose with a tissue or use the inside of their elbow to cover coughs or sneezes. Used tissues should be thrown away and hands should be washed immediately.
- **Clean and disinfect:** Frequently touched surfaces including tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, phones, toilets, faucets, and sinks should be cleaned and disinfected daily.

Sources: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>  
<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2020/03/31/824155179/cdc-director-on-models-for-the-months-to-come-this-virus-is-going-to-be-with-us>

### *Does COVID-19 only affect older people, or are younger people also at risk?*

While anyone may be at risk for infection, certain populations are at higher risk for developing severe illness from COVID-19. These include:

- **Older adults:** People ages 65 and older and people living in nursing homes or long-term care facilities are at higher risk for severe illness.
- **People with underlying conditions:** People with underlying conditions such as chronic lung disease, moderate to severe asthma, heart conditions, severe obesity, diabetes, and liver disease might be at higher risk of severe illness. People whose immune systems do not work at full capacity (i.e., are immunocompromised) might also be at higher risk.

From what we currently know, children do not appear to be at higher risk for COVID-19 than adults. While some children and infants have been sick with COVID-19, adults make up most of the known cases to date.

Because people of all ages can be infected with COVID-19, all people should take steps to protect themselves by washing hands often, avoiding close contact when possible, covering coughs and sneezes, etc.

Sources: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html>  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

### *Why might someone blame or avoid individuals and groups (create stigma) because of COVID-19?*

People may be worried for themselves, or for friends and relatives who are living in or visiting areas where COVID-19 is spreading. Fear and anxiety can lead to social stigma towards people who live in certain parts of the world, for example, or towards people who have traveled internationally, were in quarantine, or are healthcare professionals.



Stigma is discrimination against an identifiable group of people. Stigma is associated with a lack of knowledge about how COVID-19 spreads, a need to blame someone, fears about disease and death, and gossip that spreads rumors and myths.

Stigma hurts everyone by creating more fear or anger toward ordinary people instead of focusing on the disease that is causing the problem.

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

### **How can people help stop stigma related to COVID-19?**

People can fight stigma by providing social support in situations where you notice it occurring. Stigma affects the emotional or mental health of stigmatized groups and the communities they live in. Stopping stigma is important to making communities and community members resilient. Everyone can help stop stigma related to COVID-19 by knowing the facts and sharing them with others in your community

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

### **Are antibiotics effective in preventing and treating COVID-19?**

No. Antibiotics do not work against viruses—they only work on bacterial infections. Because COVID-19 is caused by a virus, antibiotics do not prevent or treat it. Some patients with COVID-19 may also develop a bacterial infection. In that case, a healthcare professional may treat the bacterial infection with an antibiotic.

Source: <https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-frequently-asked-questions>

### **Can my pets get or spread COVID-19?**

At this time, there is no evidence that companion animals, including pets, can spread COVID-19 to people or that they might be a source of infection in the United States.

On the other hand, since animals can spread other diseases to people, it's always a good idea to practice healthy habits around pets and other animals, such as washing your hands and maintaining good hygiene.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#COVID-19-and-Animals>

### **Can you get COVID-19 more than once, or do you get immunity after recovering from a case of COVID-19?**

We do not fully understand the body's immune response to the COVID-19 virus. We don't yet know if people who have had the virus can be re-infected shortly after they recover.

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

*This FAQs document was adapted from CDC and FDA websites.*

*For more information on COVID-19 and how you can stay protected, visit: <https://www.coronavirus.gov>*

