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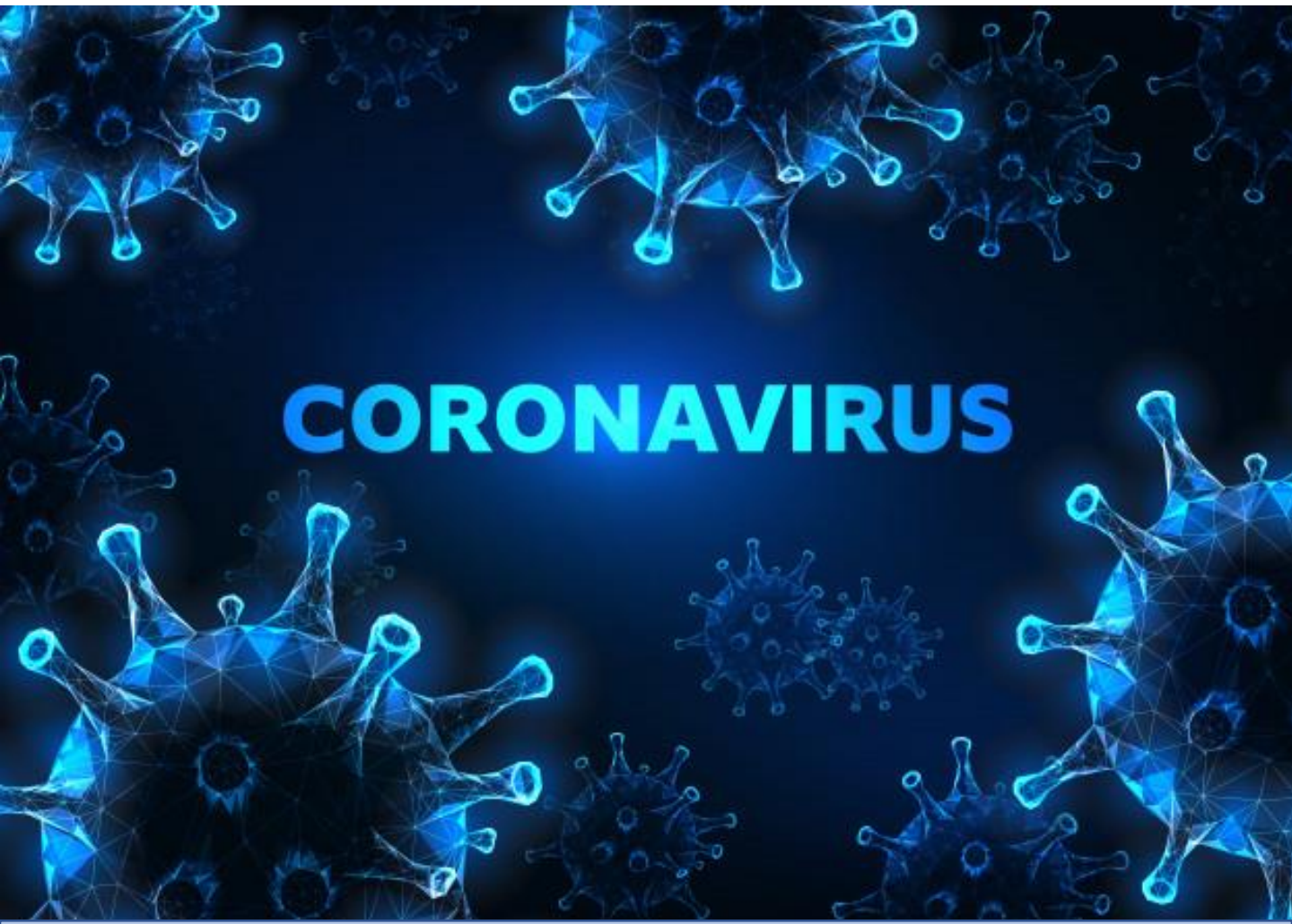


All you need to know about NOVEL COVID-19

March 2020

What is Coronavirus?

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus.

Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness.

How does Coronavirus spread?

COVID-19 spreads from person to person in close proximity, similar to other respiratory illnesses.

Droplets of bodily fluids - such as saliva or mucus - from an infected person dispersed in the air or on surfaces by coughing or sneezing can transmit the disease to healthy person.

These droplets can come into direct contact with other people or can infect those who pick them up by touching infected surfaces and then their face.

Can someone who has COVID-19 spread the illness to others?

Someone who is actively sick with COVID-19 can spread the illness to others.

That's why it is recommended that these patients be isolated either in the hospital or at home (depending on how sick they are) until they are better and no longer pose a risk of infecting others.

Symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19)

According to the WHO, the most common symptoms of Covid-19 are fever, tiredness and a dry cough. Some patients may also have a runny nose, sore throat, nasal congestion and aches and pains or diarrhoea.

Some people report losing their sense of taste and/or smell. About 80% of people who get Covid-19 experience a mild case – about as serious as a regular cold – and recover without needing any special treatment.

How can I protect myself?

Clean your hands often

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Avoid close contact

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Put distance between yourself and other people if COVID-19 is spreading in your community.
- Maintain at least 1 metre (3 feet) distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing.

Take steps to protect others

- **Stay home if you're sick**, except to get medical care.

Cover coughs and sneezes

- **Cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
- **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.

Wear a facemask if you are sick

- **If you are sick:** You should wear a facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) and before you enter a healthcare provider's office.
- **If you are NOT sick:** You do not need to wear a facemask unless you are caring for someone who is sick (and they are not able to wear a facemask).

Clean and disinfect

- **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.

What to do if you are sick with coronavirus disease (COVID-19)

If you are sick with COVID-19 or suspect you are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, follow the steps below to help prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home and community.

Stay home except to get medical care

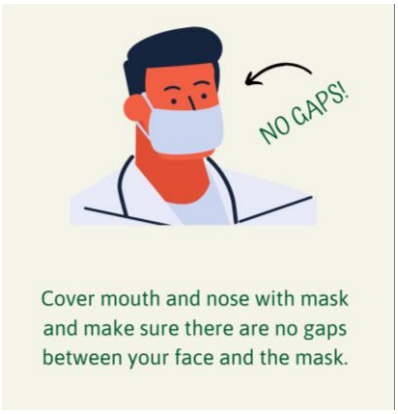
You should restrict activities outside your home, except for getting medical care. Do not go to work, school, or public areas. Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.

Anyone with symptoms should stay at home for at least 7 days. If you live with other people, they should stay at home for at least 14 days, to avoid spreading the infection outside the home. This applies to everyone, regardless of whether they have travelled abroad.

Separate yourself from other people in your home

As much as possible, you should stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. Also, you should use a separate bathroom, if available.

Wear a facemask



You should wear a facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) and before you enter a healthcare provider's office. If you are not able to wear a facemask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then people who live with you should not stay in the same room with you, or they should wear a facemask if they enter your room.

Cover your coughs and sneezes

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw used tissues in a lined trashcan; immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 to 95% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty.

Avoid sharing personal household items

You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people in your home. After using these items, they should be washed thoroughly with soap and water.

Clean your hands often

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry.

Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Clean all “high-touch” surfaces everyday

High touch surfaces include counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables, every day. Also, clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them.

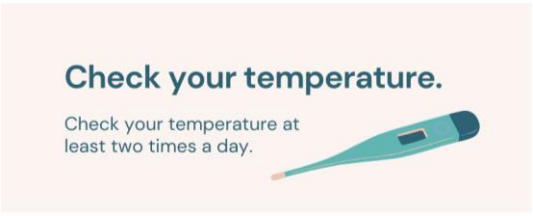
Monitor your symptoms

Seek prompt medical attention if your illness is worsening (e.g., difficulty breathing).

Before seeking care, call your healthcare provider and tell them that you have, or are being evaluated for, COVID-19.

Put on a facemask before you enter the facility. These steps will help the healthcare provider's office to keep other people in the office or waiting room from getting infected or exposed.

Ask your healthcare provider to call the local or state health department.



Discontinuing home isolation

Patients with confirmed COVID-19 should remain under home isolation precautions until the risk of secondary transmission to others is thought to be low.

- The patient is free from fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- The patient is no longer showing symptoms, including cough.
- The patient has tested negative on at least two consecutive respiratory specimens collected at least 24 hours apart.

Corona Virus and Children

What is the risk of my child becoming sick with COVID-19?

Based on available evidence, children do not appear to be at higher risk for COVID-19 than adults.

How can I protect my child from COVID-19 infection?

You can encourage your child to help stop the spread of COVID-19 by teaching them to do the same things everyone should do to stay healthy.

- Clean hands often using soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Avoid people who are sick (coughing and sneezing)
- Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces daily in household common areas (e.g. tables, hard-backed chairs, doorknobs, light switches, remotes, handles, desks, toilets, sinks)

Are the symptoms of COVID-19 different in children than in adults?

- No. The symptoms of COVID-19 are similar in children and adults.
- Children with confirmed COVID-19 have generally presented with mild symptoms. Cold-like symptoms, such as fever, runny nose, and cough. Vomiting and diarrhea have also been reported.
- It's not known yet whether some children may be at higher risk for severe illness, for example, children with underlying medical conditions.

Should children wear masks?

No. If your child is healthy, there is no need for them to wear a facemask.

Only people who have symptoms of illness or who are providing care to those who are ill should wear masks.

Pregnancy and Breastfeeding

Pregnant Women

What is the risk to pregnant women of getting COVID-19?

We do not currently know if pregnant women have a greater chance of getting sick from COVID-19 than the general public nor whether they are more likely to have serious illness as a result.

It is always important for pregnant women to protect themselves from illnesses.

How can pregnant women protect themselves from getting COVID-19?

Pregnant women should do the same things as the general public to avoid infection. You can help stop the spread of COVID-19 by taking these actions:

- Cover your cough (using your elbow is a good technique)
- Avoid people who are sick
- Clean your hands often using soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer

Can COVID-19 cause problems for a pregnancy?

We do not know at this time if COVID-19 would cause problems during pregnancy or affect the health of the baby after birth.

Can COVID-19 be passed from a pregnant woman to the fetus or newborn?

We still do not know if a pregnant woman with COVID-19 can pass the virus that causes COVID-19 to her fetus or baby during pregnancy or delivery. No infants born to mothers with COVID-19 have tested positive for the COVID-19 virus. In these cases, which are a small number, the virus was not found in samples of amniotic fluid or breastmilk.

Breastfeeding

Transmission of COVID-19 through breast milk

- Much is unknown about how COVID-19 is spread. Person-to-person spread is thought to occur mainly via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes, similar to how influenza (flu) and other respiratory pathogens spread.
- In limited studies on women with COVID-19 and another coronavirus infection, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV), the virus has not been detected in breast milk; however, we do not know whether mothers with COVID-19 can transmit the virus via breast milk.

Guidance on breastfeeding for mothers with confirmed COVID-19 or under investigation for COVID-19

- Breast milk is the best source of nutrition for most infants. However, much is unknown about COVID-19. Whether and how to start or continue breastfeeding should be determined by the mother in coordination with her family and healthcare providers.
- A mother with confirmed COVID-19 or who is a symptomatic PUI should take all possible precautions to avoid spreading the virus to her infant, including washing her hands before touching the infant and wearing a face mask, if possible, while feeding at the breast.
- If expressing breast milk with a manual or electric breast pump, the mother should wash her hands before touching any pump or bottle parts and follow recommendations for proper pump cleaning after each use.

Covid-19 and Funerals

Am I at risk if I go to a funeral or visitation service for someone who died of COVID-19?

There is currently no known risk associated with being in the same room at a funeral or visitation service with the body of someone who died of COVID-19.

Am I at risk if I touch someone who died of COVID-19 after they have passed away?

The virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to mainly spread from close contact (i.e., within about 6 feet) with a person who is currently sick with COVID-19. The virus likely spreads primarily through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes and this type of spread is not a concern after death.
People should consider not touching the body of someone who has died of COVID-19.

If washing the body or shrouding are important religious or cultural practices, families are encouraged to work with their community cultural and religious leaders and funeral home staff on how to reduce their exposure as much as possible. At a minimum, people conducting these activities should wear disposable gloves.

If splashing of fluids is expected, additional personal protective equipment (PPE) may be required (such as disposable gown, face shield or goggles and facemask).
After removal of PPE, perform hand hygiene by washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

When and how to use a mask

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Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) advice for the public: Myth busters

- COVID-19 virus can be transmitted in areas with hot and humid climates
- Cold weather and snow CANNOT kill the new coronavirus
- Taking a hot bath does not prevent the new coronavirus disease
- The new coronavirus CANNOT be transmitted through mosquito bites.
- Spraying alcohol or chlorine all over your body will not cure infected patient.
- Eating garlic will not prevent infection with the new coronavirus.
- People of all ages can be infected with the new corona virus. Older people and people with pre-existing medical conditions (Such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease) appear to be more vulnerable to becoming severely ill with the virus.
- Antibiotics are not effective in preventing and treating the new coronavirus.
- To date there is no specific medicines to prevent or treat the new coronavirus