

WHAT IS COVID-19

COVID-19, otherwise known as Coronavirus Disease 2019, is a disease that comes from a coronavirus -- an upper-respiratory illness that can be transmitted from person to person. The origin of the disease began in Wuhan, China and has since then become a pandemic -- resulting in hundreds of thousands of deaths and hospitalizations around the world.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS AND WARNING SIGNS OF COVID-19?

Symptoms include fever, dry cough, and difficulty breathing and can arise between two to fourteen days after exposure. They also range from mild to severe to even death. Whether you are a child or an adult, the symptoms remain the same - although most children who fall ill show mild symptoms.

Warning signs for COVID-19 include (but are not limited to) difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion or inability to arouse and bluish lips or face.

“The disease is spread through contaminated respiratory droplets.”



HOW DOES COVID-19 SPREAD?

The disease is spread through contaminated respiratory droplets. When someone coughs or sneezes, the droplets are released into the air and can land on another person's mouth or nose. This is the main way the coronavirus spreads -- from person to person. Another way someone can get the illness is if someone touches a surface that has been contaminated with COVID-19 and then touches their face.

FLU OR THE CORONAVIRUS? THE MAIN DIFFERENCES

There are many similarities between the flu and COVID-19. However, there are two distinct differences between the two. The first way you can tell if you have COVID-19 is if you have shortness of breath. This includes symptoms such as intense tightening in the chest, difficulty breathing, breathlessness or a feeling of suffocation. The second difference is that the coronavirus has a gradual onset, meaning symptoms begin to show two to fourteen days after coming in contact with the illness. Unlike the coronavirus, flu symptoms can develop within hours. As always, if you or someone you know is having difficulty determining whether they have the coronavirus or something else, seek medical attention immediately.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

CDC (Centers for Disease Control)

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus

World Health Organization (WHO)

www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019

WorldoMeter Live Updates

www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/

in the know

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COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS

STOP THE SPREAD!





WHO IS MOST LIKELY / LESS LIKELY AT RISK TO COVID-19?

- Older adults (60+) are at the highest risk for becoming infected with this illness, especially if they have other underlying medical conditions such as heart disease, diabetes and lung disease.
- Individuals who have autoimmune diseases or chronic illnesses are considered high risk -- such as diabetes, asthma, chronic lung disease, etc.
- Young adults, who at first were considered low-risk, are increasing in numbers in the United States.
- Children, although not invincible, are not a high risk for COVID-19.



HOW CAN YOU PROTECT YOURSELF FROM COVID-19?

To reduce your risk of getting sick, you should:

- Wash your hands often -- for at least 20 seconds
- Don't touch your face -- especially your mouth, nose and eyes
- Stay home if you're sick
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces often, everyday
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or the inside of your elbow
- Stay 6 feet away from others at all times
- Wear a facemask when going in public

Most importantly, the best way to protect yourself from COVID-19 is with social distancing -- avoiding public spaces and staying home as much as possible.



WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU HAVE BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH COVID-19?

If you have been diagnosed with the coronavirus, you should follow the same protection guidelines before you were diagnosed with COVID-19 (see section titled "How can you protect yourself from COVID-19?") as well as the the following:

- Stay home except to go to the doctor
- Isolate yourself from others in the household
- Do not share household items with other members in the household
- Make sure household has good airflow -- such as a working air conditioner or opening windows
- Limit contact with your pets and other animals
- Wear a facemask to avoid transmitting the illness to others
- Monitor your symptoms and keep in touch with your doctor
- Monitor the news and try not to panic

WHEN CAN YOU BE AROUND OTHERS?

Once you are no longer showing any symptoms of COVID-19, you've had no fever for 24 hours without medication, and it's been 10 days since symptoms first appeared, you are OK to be released from isolation.

VACCINES & IMMUNITY

COVID-19 vaccines have been proven to protect most people from severe disease, however it isn't known how long immunity will last. It may be possible to contract and spread COVID-19 even though you've been vaccinated. Those vaccinated for COVID-19 should continue to wear masks and practice social distancing. Even if you've had COVID-19 and recovered, you should still receive the vaccine.



If you or someone you know is having difficulty determining whether they have the coronavirus or something else, seek medical attention immediately.



IN CONCLUSION

As COVID-19 continues to increase hospitalizations and deaths around the world, it is important to stay vigilant.

Do not get tested for COVID-19 if you are healthy. We must keep resources that are available to individuals who have been tested positive for the coronavirus.

Practice social distancing and continuously maintain a clean work and home environment. Wear a facemask in public and make sure to sanitize yourself and your surroundings regularly. Stay positive and keep up with the news as new data and information is shared daily.