

Facts & DETAILS

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

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What is COVID-19?

Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) is a novel (new) coronavirus first reported in Wuhan, China in December 2019. SARS-CoV-2 causes the human respiratory illness coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

Human coronaviruses were first identified in the mid-1960s. Seven sub-groups are known to infect people, including several that cause the common cold. MERS-CoV (which causes Middle East Respiratory Syndrome), SARS-CoV (which causes severe acute respiratory syndrome), and the 2019 novel coronavirus infect animals and have evolved to make people sick.

How common is COVID-19?

Over 38 million COVID-19 cases have been identified globally with symptoms ranging from mild to severe. COVID-19 cases have been reported in the United States. Some cases have had history of travel from a country with ongoing COVID-19 transmission, but many have been linked to community spread. All United States cases have been identified through public health screening and monitoring systems.

How do people become infected?

Similar to other coronaviruses, COVID-19 is spread by droplets from an infected person's nose or mouth through coughing, sneezing, and talking.

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.

Some recent studies have suggested that COVID-19 may be spread by aerosolized droplets produced by talking.

What are the signs and symptoms of COVID-19?

Reports show that COVID-19 causes mild to severe respiratory illness. Some patients have developed pneumonia, and some people have died from the infection. COVID-19 symptoms include:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills or shivering
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Diarrhea
- Fatigue or feeling more tired than normal
- Ringing in the ears or temporary loss of hearing

After exposure, COVID-19 symptoms typically appear within 14 days.

How long can a person spread COVID-19?

Recent studies have suggested that someone with COVID-19 may be contagious before they show symptoms. However, they become most contagious when symptoms develop.

Who is at risk for COVID-19?

Anyone who is exposed to the virus can become infected. Adults are most affected and people over age 60 and adults who also have other health conditions are at greater risk for severe illness.



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How is COVID-19 treated?

COVID-19 is caused by a virus, so antibiotics won't work. There is no specific treatment for COVID-19.

How can you prevent COVID-19?

There is no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. At this time, the CDC recommends people avoid all non-essential international travel and travel to states with community spread. This is an evolving situation so please check the CDC website regularly at <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>.

You can prevent infection by doing the following:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water
- Don't share drinking cups or utensils with other people
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Practice social distancing by keeping at least 6 feet between you and others
- Stay home when you are sick
- Homemade masks/face coverings are the easiest and most effective way to protect each other, and keep people from unknowingly spreading the virus

Face Mask Guidance

Use this acronym when considering safe homemade mask use:

- **Multi**-layered, tightly-woven 100% Cotton. Use a thread count of 180 or higher. Don't buy surgical or N95 masks.
- **Avoid** your face and remove it from behind. Never touch the front of the mask, and always remove it from behind your head.
- **Scrap** it if it's damaged, soiled, or doesn't fit. Make sure it's breathable and fits snug. Don't use it while it's damp, wet, or dirty.
- **Keep** the mask and your hands clean. Wash your hands before you put the mask on/after you take it off. Wash or dispose the mask after every use.

Travel Quarantine

Mandatory quarantines in due to travel with high COVID-19 community transmission areas were recently updated and can be found at <https://www.sedgwickcounty.org/covid-19/covid-19-faqs-for-the-general-public/>.

For More Information:

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