

Frequently Asked Questions about COVID – 19

Limited information is available to characterize the spectrum of clinical illness associated with coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). No vaccine or specific treatment for COVID-19 is available; care is supportive.

What are the symptoms and complications that COVID -19 can cause?

Current symptoms reported for patients with COVID-19 have included mild to severe respiratory illness with fever, cough, and difficulty breathing.

Should I be tested for COVID -19?

Not everyone needs to be tested for COVID -19. Here is some information that might help you make decisions about seeking medical care or testing.

- Most people have mild illness and are able to recover at home without medical care. They may not need to be tested.
- There is no treatment specifically approved for people who have COVID -19.
- If you think you may be sick, stay home and consult with your healthcare provider on the need for testing.

CDC has guidance for who should be tested, but **decisions about testing are at the discretion of state and local health departments and/or individual clinicians.**

Where can I get tested for COVID -19?

The process and locations for testing vary from place to place. Contact your state, local, tribal, or territorial department for more information, or reach out to a medical provider. State and local public health departments have received tests from CDC while medical providers are getting tests developed by commercial manufacturers. While supplies of these tests are increasing, it may still be difficult to find someplace to get tested.

How does the virus spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly 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).

COVID-19 seems to be spreading easily and sustainably in the community (“community spread”) in [many affected geographic areas](#). Community spread means people have been infected with the virus in an area, including some who are not sure how or where they became infected.

What steps can my family take to reduce our risk of getting COVID -19?

Practice everyday preventive actions to help reduce your risk of getting sick and remind everyone in your home to do the same. These actions are especially important for older adults and people who have severe chronic medical conditions.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue and throw the tissue in the trash.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects (e.g., tables, countertops, light switches, doorknobs, and cabinet handles).

What should I do have someone in my house gets sick with COVID – 19?

Most people who get COVID-19 will be able to recover at home. [CDC has directions](#) for people who are recovering at home and their caregivers, including:

- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.

When to seek medical attention

- If you develop emergency warning signs for COVID-19 get medical attention immediately:
 - Trouble breathing
 - Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
 - New confusion or inability to arouse
 - Bluish lips or face

Call 911 if you have a medical emergency: Notify the operator that you have, or think you might have, COVID-19. If possible, put on a cloth face covering before medical help arrives.

- Use a separate room and bathroom for sick household members (if possible).
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- Provide your sick household member with clean disposable facemasks to wear at home, if available, to help prevent spreading COVID-19 to others.

- [Clean the sick room and bathroom](#), as needed, to avoid unnecessary contact with the sick person.
- Avoid sharing personal items like utensils, food, and drinks.

Why do you need to wear cloth face coverings?

In light of new data about [how COVID-19 spreads](#), along with evidence of widespread COVID-19 illness in communities across the country, CDC recommends that people wear a [cloth face covering](#) to cover their nose and mouth in the community setting. This is to protect people around you if you are infected but do not have symptoms.