

# COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019)

## What is COVID-19?

COVID-19, also known as coronavirus disease 2019, is a new virus that causes fever, cough, and shortness of breath. We are still learning about this virus, but researchers think it is very similar to SARS or MERS. The virus was originally reported from Wuhan City, China. At this point, close to 99% of all reported illnesses have occurred in China, however, COVID-19 has been confirmed in individuals in over 40 countries, including the United States.

There are many different types of coronaviruses that are known to cause human illness. While initial COVID-19 illnesses were thought to be related to contact with infected animals, this virus is able to be passed person-to-person through respiratory droplets when an ill individual coughs or sneezes. While most individuals infected with COVID-19 appear to have mild illness, the virus can cause severe illness including pneumonia. The virus can also survive for a limited time on commonly touched surfaces. At this point, there is no vaccine to prevent COVID-19.

## What should I do?

### PREVENT

- **Avoid contact with people who have respiratory illness.**
- **Wash your hands** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth** with unwashed hands.
- **Cover your cough or sneeze** with your elbow or arm.
- **Wear disposable gloves and a mask IF** you are caring for a person that is ill or came in contact with an individual's bodily fluids or secretions. Remove your mask and gloves carefully and immediately wash your hands.
- **Regularly clean commonly touched surfaces** such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, phones, toilets, etc. with a diluted bleach solution or use a cleaner with a label that claims it can kill human coronaviruses. Make sure to follow the instructions on the label.

*To create a bleach solution, use 1 tablespoon bleach to 4 cups of water. Make fresh daily.*

### AVOID

- **Stay home when you are ill.** Isolating yourself while you are ill can help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and more common illnesses, like influenza.
- **Do not wear face masks, in general.** The health department does not recommend the general public use masks to prevent the spread of illnesses unless caring for or cleaning up after someone who is ill.
- **Look for travel related recommendations and restrictions.** You can get updated travel restrictions at [www.cdc.gov/travel/notices](http://www.cdc.gov/travel/notices).

**If you traveled to an area of the world with ongoing COVID-19 transmission or have been in contact with an individual with COVID-19 and develop a fever, shortness of breath and a cough, please contact your medical provider for instructions. If COVID-19 illness is suspected, medical providers should call 1-866-PUB-HLTH for consultation and further instructions.**

**Additional information about what to do when you are sick can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/steps-when-sick.html>.**

**Please visit the Center for Disease Control website for the most up-to-date information available on COVID-19. [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html).**



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