CORONAVIRUS - WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

Current Situation

COVID-19 is a virus identified as the cause of an outbreak of respiratory illness first detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China in 2019 and has since spread globally into a pandemic. Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. While roughly 80% of cases report mild symptoms, some progress into severe pneumonia and multi-organ failure and can lead to death. Current data indicates the risk of death for those contracting COVID-19 notably increases for individuals above the age of 60 or for individuals with autoimmune conditions. On January 11, 2020, the first set of individuals in the United States tested positive for COVID-19. The virus has since spread across all 50 states and the number of individuals testing positive for COVID-19 continues to rapidly grow each day.

Who should be tested

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

- Most people have mild illness and are able to recover at home.
- There is no treatment specifically approved for this virus.
- Testing results may be helpful to inform decision-making about who you come in contact with.

What to do after you are tested

- If you test positive for COVID-19, follow the steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19:

Steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick

Stay home except to get medical care

- Stay home: Most people with COVID-19 have mild illness and are able to recover at home without medical care. Do not leave your home, except to get medical care. Do not visit public areas.
- Stay in touch with your doctor. Call before you get medical care. Be sure to get care if you have trouble breathing, or have any other emergency warning signs, or if you think it is an emergency.
- Avoid public transportation: Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.

Separate yourself from other people and pets in your home, this is known as home isolation
- Stay away from others: As much as possible, stay away from others. You should stay in a specific "sick room" if possible, and away from other people and pets in your home. Use a separate bathroom, if available.
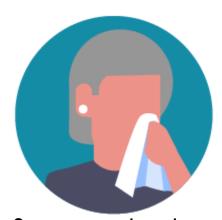
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Call ahead before visiting your doctor
- Call ahead: Many medical visits for routine care are being postponed or done by phone or telemedicine.
- If you have a medical appointment that cannot be postponed, call your doctor's office, and tell them you have or may have COVID-19. This will help the office protect themselves and other patients.

If you are sick wear a cloth covering over your nose and mouth

- You should wear a cloth face covering over your nose and mouth if you must be around other people even at home).

Cover your coughs and sneezes

- Cover: Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Dispose: Throw used tissues in a lined trash can.
- Wash hands: Immediately wash your hands 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.

Clean your hands often

- Wash hands: Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. This is especially important after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.

- Hand sanitizer: If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry.
- Soap and water: Soap and water are the best option, especially if hands are visibly dirty.
- Avoid touching: Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

More details: [Handwashing Tips](#)

Avoid sharing personal household items
- Do not share: Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people in your home.
- Wash thoroughly after use: After using these items, wash them thoroughly with soap and water or put in the dishwasher.

Clean all "high-touch" surfaces everyday
Clean high-touch surfaces in your isolation area ("sick room" and bathroom) every day; let a caregiver clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces in other areas of the home.

- Clean and disinfect: Routinely clean high-touch surfaces in your "sick room" and bathroom. Let someone else clean and disinfect surfaces in common areas, but not your bedroom and bathroom.

High-touch surfaces include phones, remote controls, counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables.

- Clean and disinfect areas that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them.

- Household cleaners and disinfectants: Clean the area or item with soap and water or another detergent if it is dirty. Then, use a household disinfectant.
  o Be sure to follow the instructions on the label to ensure safe and effective use of the product. Many products recommend keeping the surface wet for several minutes to ensure germs are killed. Many also recommend precautions such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.

Monitor your symptoms
- Common symptoms of COVID-19 include fever and cough. Trouble breathing is a more serious symptom that means you should get medical attention.
- If you are having trouble breathing, seek medical attention, but call first.
  o Call your doctor or emergency room before going in and tell them your symptoms. They will tell you what to do.
- Wear a cloth face covering (covers your nose and mouth): Put on the cloth face covering when you leave your house or when around other people. You don't need to wear the cloth face covering if you are alone. If you can't put on a cloth face covering (because of trouble breathing for example), cover your coughs and sneezes in some other way. Try to stay at least 6 feet away from other people. This will help protect the people around you.
- Follow care instructions from your healthcare provider and local health department: Your local health authorities may give instructions on checking your symptoms and reporting information.

When to Seek Medical Attention

If you develop emergency warning signs for COVID-19 get medical attention immediately. Emergency warning signs include*:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse

- Bluish lips or face

*This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning.

If you test negative for COVID-19, you probably were not infected at the time your specimen was collected. However, that does not mean you will not get sick. It is possible that you were very early in your infection at the time of your specimen collection and that you could test positive later, or you could be exposed later and then develop illness. In other words, a negative test result does not rule out getting sick later.

"Centers for Disease Control and Prevention." *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,* Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov/.