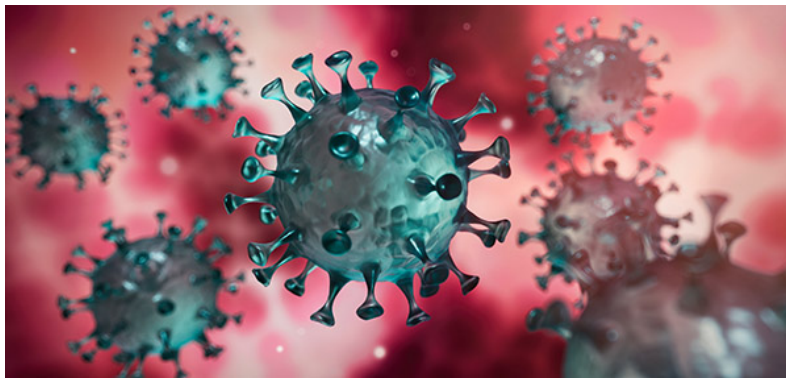


What is Coronavirus (COVID-19) and how to protect yourself against infection



Toolbox talk

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Coronavirus

Coronaviruses (CoV) are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as [Middle East Respiratory Syndrome \(MERS-CoV\)](#) and [Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome \(SARS-CoV\)](#). [A novel coronavirus \(nCoV\)](#) is a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans.

Coronaviruses are zoonotic, meaning they are transmitted between animals and people. Detailed investigations found that SARS-CoV was transmitted from civet cats to humans and MERS-CoV from dromedary camels to humans. Several known coronaviruses are circulating in animals that have not yet infected humans.

Common signs of infection include respiratory symptoms, fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties. In more severe cases, the infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, kidney failure and even death.

Standard recommendations to prevent infection spread include regular hand washing, covering mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing, thoroughly cooking meat and

eggs. Avoid close contact with anyone showing symptoms of respiratory illness such as coughing and sneezing.

Basic protective measures against the new coronavirus

Stay aware of the latest information on the COVID-19 outbreak, available on the WHO website and through your national and local public health authority. COVID-19 is still affecting mostly people in China with some outbreaks in other countries. Most people who become infected experience mild illness and recover, but it can be more severe for others. Take care of your health and protect others by doing the following:

Wash your hands frequently

Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water.

Why? Washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub kills viruses that may be on your hands.

Maintain social distancing

Maintain at least 1 metre (3 feet) distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing.

Why? When someone coughs or sneezes they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth which may contain the virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus if the person coughing has the disease.

Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth

Why? Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and can make you sick.

Practice respiratory hygiene

Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately.

Why? Droplets spread the virus. By following good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from infections such as cold, flu and COVID-19.

If you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical care early

Stay home if you feel unwell. If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention and call in advance. Follow the directions of your local health authority.

Why? National and local authorities will have the most up to date information on the situation in your area. Calling in advance will allow your health care provider to direct you to the right health facility quickly. This will also protect you and help prevent the spread of viruses and other infections.



Protect yourself and others from getting sick

Wash your hands

- after coughing or sneezing
- when caring for the sick
- before, during and after you prepare food
- before eating
- after toilet use
- when hands are visibly dirty
- after handling animals or animal waste



Protect others from getting sick

When coughing and sneezing **cover mouth and nose** with flexed elbow or tissue



Throw tissue into closed bin immediately after use



Clean hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water after coughing or sneezing and when caring for the sick



Protect others from getting sick



Avoid close contact when you are experiencing cough and fever

Avoid spitting in public



If you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing seek medical care early and share previous travel history with your health care provider



Wash your hands

Wash your hands with soap and running water when hands are visibly dirty



If your hands are not visibly dirty, frequently clean them by using alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water



STAY HEALTHY WHILE TRAVELLING

Avoid close contact with people suffering from a fever and cough



Frequently clean hands by using alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water

Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth



STAY HEALTHY WHILE TRAVELLING

Avoid travel if you have a fever and cough



If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing seek medical care early and share previous travel history with your health care provider



STAY HEALTHY WHILE TRAVELLING

When coughing and sneezing cover mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue – throw tissue away immediately and wash hands



If you choose to wear a face mask, be sure to cover mouth and nose - avoid touching mask once it's on

Immediately discard single-use mask after each use and wash hands after removing masks



STAY HEALTHY WHILE TRAVELLING

Eat only well-cooked food



Avoid spitting in public

Avoid close contact and travel with animals that are sick



