

COVID-19

What Exactly is a novel Coronavirus?

A novel coronavirus is a new coronavirus that has not been previously identified. The virus causing coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), is not the same as the coronaviruses that commonly circulate among humans and cause mild illness, like the common cold. Patients with COVID-19 will be evaluated and cared for differently than patients with common coronavirus diagnosis.

Know How it Spreads

There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus.

- The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person. Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) 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.

Take Steps to Protect Yourself

1. Clean your hands often

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth especially with unwashed hands.

2. Cover coughs and sneezes

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
- Throw used tissues in the trash immediately.
- Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

3. Avoid close contact with others

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Put distance between yourself and other people if COVID-19 is spreading in your community. This is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting sick.
- Stay home unless absolutely necessary.

Clean and Disinfect

Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily.

- This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
- If surfaces are dirty, clean them: Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- To disinfect: Most common EPA-registered household disinfectants will work. Use disinfectants appropriate for the surface.

Watch for Symptoms

Reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death for confirmed coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases.

The following symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure.

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

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

Call your Doctor if you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms, such as cough or difficulty breathing. However if you develop emergency warning signs for COVID-19 get medical attention immediately. Emergency warning signs include:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face

If You Are Sick

- If you are sick: You should wear a face-mask when you are around other people (sharing a room or vehicle) and before you enter a healthcare provider's office.
- If you are not able to wear a face-mask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then you should do your best to cover your coughs and sneezes by using a tissue that is promptly disposed in a trash can or by using the bend of you elbow. People who are caring for you should wear a face-mask if they enter your room.
- If you are NOT sick: You do not need to wear a face-mask unless you are caring for someone who is sick (and they are not able to wear a face-mask). Face-masks may be in short supply and they should be saved for caregivers.

Separate yourself from other people in your home, this is known as home isolation

- Stay away from others: As much as possible, you should stay in a specific "sick room" and away from other people in your home. Use a separate bathroom, if available.

People Who are at Higher Risk

Some people may be at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. This includes:

- Older adults (65 years and older)

People who have serious underlying medical conditions like:

- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Lung disease (such as asthma, COPD)
- HIV/AIDS
- Pregnant Women
- Immunocompromised
- Cancer

Fear and anxiety about a disease can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children. Taking care of yourself, your friends, and your family can help you cope with stress. Helping others cope with their stress can also make your community stronger.

Things you Can Do to Support Yourself

- Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.
- Take care of your body. Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, and get plenty of sleep.
- Make time to unwind. Try to do some other activities you enjoy.
- Connect with others. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.

The Tennessee Department of Health has launched a Tennessee Coronavirus Public information line in partnership the Tennessee Poison Center. The number is 877-857-2945 and is available daily from 10 am-10pm central time for any questions. Also the CDC will provide

updated information and guidance as it becomes available. Visit their website to learn more

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>