

Basic information about COVID-19



How the virus is spread from person to person

People catch COVID-19 from others who have the virus. The disease is spread through small droplets produced when infected people cough, sneeze, or exhale. These droplets can be inhaled by people nearby or land on nearby objects and surfaces. When people inhale droplets or touch contaminated objects or surfaces, then touch their eyes, nose, or mouth, they can be infected. This is why it is important to stay more than 1 metre away from a person who is sick. Most countries have enacted distancing policies which state that, for maximum protection against spread of the COVID-19 virus, individuals should keep at least 1 metre away from all other individuals except their families.



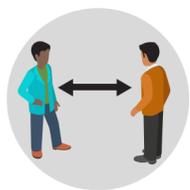
Symptoms of infection

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, tiredness, and dry cough. Symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually. Some infected people have no symptoms and don't feel ill. Most people (about 80%) recover without special treatment. About 1 in 6 people become seriously ill. Older people and people with health issues such as heart problems, diabetes, and high blood pressure are more likely to become seriously ill. People with fever, cough, and difficulty breathing should seek medical attention.

Precautionary measures



Wash your hands frequently. Clean your hands regularly and thoroughly for at least 20 seconds with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. Why? Washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub kills viruses on your hands.



Maintain social / physical distancing. Maintain at least 1 metre distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing. Why? When someone coughs or sneezes, they spray small droplets from their nose or mouth which may contain the virus. If you are too close, you may breathe in the droplets. Most countries have enacted distancing policies which state that, for maximum protection against spread of the COVID-19 virus, individuals should keep at least 1 metre away from all other individuals except their families.



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



Practice good respiratory hygiene. When you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or a tissue. Dispose of the used tissue immediately. Why? Droplets spread the virus. By following good respiratory hygiene, you can protect the people around you from COVID-19 and other viruses such as colds and the flu.



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

Stay home if you feel unwell. Seek medical attention and call in advance. Follow the directions of your local health authority. Why? National and local authorities have the most up-to-date information on the situation in your area. Calling in advance allows your health care provider to quickly direct you to the right health facility. This will protect you and help prevent the spread of COVID-19.



Practice safe greetings. To avoid COVID-19, it is safest to avoid physical contact when greeting. Safe greetings include a wave, a nod, or a bow.