



What is the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus that was first identified during an outbreak investigation in Wuhan, China.

What you should know:

The symptoms include mild to severe respiratory illness with:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Having these symptoms alone does not mean that someone has the virus. Symptoms may appear in as few as two days or as long as 14 days after exposure. The greatest risk of infection is for individuals who have traveled internationally; however, because the virus is moving around the globe, the opportunity to be in contact with it may be rising. These symptoms mimic flu-like symptoms and there are currently no specific treatments for COVID-19. Preventive measures for this virus are similar to other respiratory viruses such as the flu.

What if I am experiencing any of these symptoms?

- Stay home except to get medical care! You don't want to bring your illness into the workplace and get others sick as well, so please take the appropriate time to recover completely.

- You should also contact your healthcare provider immediately. Don't wait for symptoms to worsen!

What are some ways I can protect myself and my family?

- According to the CDC, proper handwashing with soap and water is one of the best ways to prevent illness.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Throw the tissue away after use and wash your hands. If a tissue is not available, cover your mouth and nose with your sleeve. (I know, gross, right? But you want to contain germs and the CDC recommends this method.)
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- If possible, avoid people who are sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces or objects.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Follow CDC's recommendations for using a facemask.
 - CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.
 - Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others.

Most importantly as with any potential illness, use sound judgement. We wish you and your family health and wellness. If you have any questions, please let me know.

(Source: [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov))