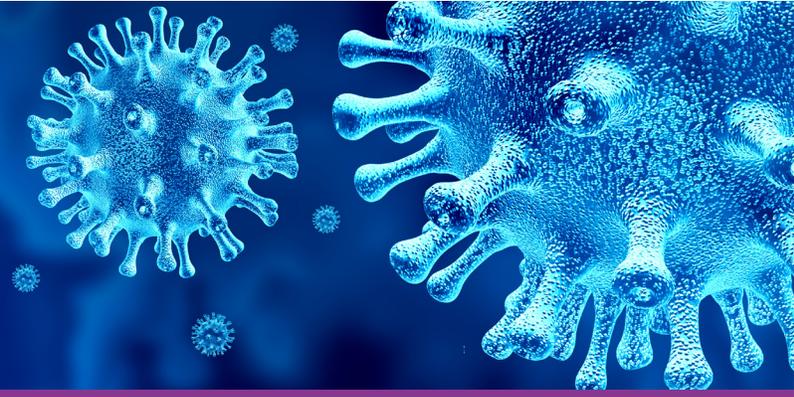




# COVID-19



## What You Need to Know About Coronavirus & COVID-19

### What is 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 investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China.

### Can I get COVID-19?

Since there is no vaccine for COVID-19, everyone could be at risk for getting the illness.

It's important to remember that for most people who are healthy, the immediate risk of becoming seriously ill from the virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to be low. The vast majority of individuals who become infected are able to manage their disease at home.

Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for more serious complications from COVID-19.

### How does COVID-19 spread?

Current understanding about how the virus that causes the COVID-19 infection spreads is largely based on what is known about similar coronaviruses.

#### Person-to-person spread occurs:

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet)
- Via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes
- When these droplets land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or are inhaled into the lungs

#### Spread from contact with infected surfaces or objects

- It may be possible that a person can become infected with COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the new coronavirus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose or eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

### What can you do to avoid getting sick?

The same precautions you take to avoid the flu will also help prevent the spread of this new, including rigorous hand hygiene, social distancing, and avoiding touching your mouth, nose or eyes.

### What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

- Fever
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Headache
- Cough
- New loss of taste or smell
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Sore throat
- Difficulty breathing

New research shows that about 25% percent of people with COVID-19 show no symptoms at all (also known as asymptomatic carriers).

### What should you do if you think you may be at risk?

If you develop a fever or symptoms of respiratory illness, such as cough or shortness of breath, you should call your primary doctor right away or use a telemedicine service. If you have life-threatening symptoms head to your nearest emergency department or call 9-1-1.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Chinese Journal of Epidemiology

## FIVE STEPS you can take to protect yourself and others from viruses and help stop the spread of germs:

1. Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
2. Stay home when you are sick.
3. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper arm.
4. Clean your hands. Frequent washing helps protect you and others from germs. Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
5. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs are often spread this way.



# Common Myths about COVID-19 Explained

**Claim: Warm weather will kill the virus.**

**UNCLEAR**

It's unclear. We are hopeful that this new coronavirus will dissipate similarly to SARS. The idea is that through social distancing and isolation, the virus will be controlled and eventually die out.

Overall, practicing good hygiene and social distancing are the most important things you can do at this time.

**Claim: You can give COVID-19 to your pets.**

**TRUE**

While we are still learning everyday about this new coronavirus, it appears that it can spread from people to animals in some situations, according to the CDC. However, as of now, there's no evidence that animals play a significant role in spreading the coronavirus.

If you have COVID-19, treat your animals as you would anyone else and avoid contact until you are no longer ill.

**Claim: Disinfectants can help treat infection.**

**FALSE**

Disinfectants cannot be used to treat infection in a person. Do not consume, inject, inhale or otherwise try to use any disinfectant (including bleach, Lysol, etc) product to treat an infection. This can be extremely hazardous to your health.

**Claim: Everyone should wear a mask when in public places.**

**TRUE**

Initial public health guidance was that masks should only be worn by front-line workers and would not be helpful for most people. But this guidance changed after further studies have shown transmission by people who had no symptoms of infection.

The CDC now recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies).

Of course, continue to also practice good hygiene: wash hands frequently, and don't touch your mouth, nose and eyes.

**Claim: COVID-19 will continue to spread.**

**TRUE**

We should expect to see more cases of COVID-19, however, we are doing our best to isolate those patients. If you use common sense precautions to prevent the spread of disease (practicing good hygiene), there is less of a risk.

**Claim: A vaccine for COVID-19 is available.**

**FALSE**

There is currently no vaccine available to protect against COVID-19. Several vaccine trials are underway in the U.S. and abroad, but experts say they are many months away from being ready for widespread use.

**Claim: Home remedies that include garlic, chlorine, warm water, or lemon juice can help prevent or treat COVID-19 infection.**

**FALSE**

There is no evidence that such remedies are effective against COVID-19 or any other virus.

**Information about COVID-19 is rapidly changing. To get the most up-to-date information about testing, visitor restrictions and all things related to the virus, visit [HackensackMeridianHealth.org/COVID19](https://www.hackensackmeridianhealth.org/COVID19).**