

# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

## What is coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory virus 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 people in the U.S. get COVID-19?

COVID-19 is spreading from person-to-person in China, and in some countries outside of China, including the United States. At this time, however, the spread in the United States is limited. Right now, the greatest risk of infection is for people in China or people who have traveled to China. Risk of infection depends on exposure. People who come in close contact with infected individuals are at a greater risk of infection, but the CDC continues to closely monitor the situation.

## How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 is spread through the air by coughing and sneezing. It can also be spread through close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands with an infected person. Touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes is another way COVID-19 is spread. Learn what is known about the spread of newly emerged coronaviruses at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html>

## What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

## What are severe complications from this virus?

Many patients have pneumonia in both lungs.

## There are simple everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses.

These include:

- Wash your hands open with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

## Can people in the U.S. get COVID-19?

- Stay home.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched object and surfaces.

## What should I do if I recently traveled to an area affected by COVID-19 and got sick?

If you were in an affected area within the past 14 days and feel sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, call your healthcare provider before you go, and tell them about your travel and your symptoms. They will give you instructions on how to get care without exposing other people to your illness. While sick, avoid contact with people, don't go out, and delay any travel to reduce the possibility of spreading illness to others.

## Is there a vaccine?

There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

## Is there a treatment?

There is no specific antiviral treatment for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 can seek medical care to help relieve symptoms.

CORONAVIRUS.DC.GOV



DC | HEALTH  
GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

WE ARE WASHINGTON  
GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DC MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR