



# CORONAVIRUS

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

### WHAT IS A CORONAVIRUS AND WHAT IS CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), coronaviruses are common in animals, and most don't affect humans. As of now, only seven different coronaviruses are known to infect humans. Common coronaviruses typically cause mild to moderate upper-respiratory tract illnesses, and those affected exhibit cold-like symptoms.

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 PEOPLE IN THE U.S. GET COVID-19

COVID-19 is spreading from person to person in China, and limited spread among close contacts has been detected in some countries outside China, including the United States. Currently, this virus is NOT currently spreading in communities in the United States. Right now, the greatest risk of infection is for people in China or people who have traveled to China. Risk of infection is dependent on exposure. Close contacts of people who are infected are at greater risk of exposure, for example health care workers and close contacts of people who are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19. CDC continues to closely monitor the situation.

### HAVE THERE BEEN CASES OF COVID-19 IN THE U.S.

Yes. The first case of COVID-19 in the United States was reported on January 21, 2020.

If you were in China within the past 14 days and feel sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, you should seek medical care. Call the office of your health care 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.

#### HOW IT SPREADS

The virus probably emerged from an animal source, but now it seems to be spreading from person to person. It's important to note that person-to-person spread can happen on a continuum. Some diseases are highly contagious (like measles), while other diseases are less so. Currently, it's unclear how easily or sustainably the virus is spreading between people.

If you are sick, to keep from spreading respiratory illness to others, you should stay home when you are sick. Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash, and clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

#### SYMPTOMS

Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, and runny nose.

Some cases of the coronavirus can be more severe, and individuals experience more serious lower-respiratory tract illness like bronchitis and pneumonia. For the elderly, infants, and those with weakened immune systems, coronavirus can be even more serious.

If you are exhibiting coronavirus symptoms, you should call your doctor, especially if you're experiencing symptoms and have traveled to countries where outbreaks have been reported. Your doctor will likely order a lab test to detect coronavirus. Be sure to disclose any recent travel to your doctor.

#### TREATMENT

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

There is currently no vaccine to protect against the virus. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid exposure.

To help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, avoid close contact with people who are sick, and avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. Wash your hands often 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.



**LEARN MORE**

**WHO:** [www.who.int/csr/don/12-january-2020-novel-coronavirus-china/en/](http://www.who.int/csr/don/12-january-2020-novel-coronavirus-china/en/)  
**CDC:** [www.cdc.gov/COVID19](http://www.cdc.gov/COVID19)

