



## **What is Coronavirus - COVID-19?**

COVID-19 is a new virus within the Coronavirus family that was discovered in Wuhan, China, in December 2019.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) on March 12, 2020, Covid-19 has rapidly spread to 118 countries, including the United States, Canada and Mexico, with nearly 125,000 cases reported.

## **How is COVID-19 transmitted?**

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), early on, many of the patients at the epicenter of the outbreak in Wuhan, China had some link to a large seafood and live animal market, suggesting animal-to-person spread. Later, a growing number of patients reportedly did not have exposure to animal markets, indicating person-to-person spread. People can catch COVID-19 from others who have the virus. The disease can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth which are spread when a person with COVID-19 coughs, sneezes or exhales. These droplets can then land on people, objects and surfaces around the infected person; people can then catch COVID-19 by touching these objects or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose or mouth. People can also catch COVID-19 if they breathe in droplets from a person with COVID-19 who coughs out or exhales within their vicinity. Infection spread may also occur through discharge from the nose or mouth where cross contamination occurs (such as when an infected person rubs their nose and then shakes someone's hand before washing). It is also possible to catch COVID-19 from someone who is infected with COVID-19 and has just a mild cough and does not feel ill.

## **COVID-19 survivability outside the body.**

According to the WHO, COVID-19 can stay on surfaces up to several days. If you think a surface may be contaminated, use an appropriate EPA listed disinfectant to clean it. After touching potentially contaminated surfaces, wash your hands with soap and water or use an appropriate hand sanitizer.

## **What is your risk of contracting COVID-19?**

It is important to evaluate your risk (or chance) of contracting COVID-19. The risk depends on whether there is a COVID-19 outbreak unfolding where you are. Risk to the general public of contracting COVID-19 in areas where there are currently no COVID-19 cases is low. Going to public places where an outbreak is unfolding will increase your risk of coming into contact with an infected person or contaminated surface which can increase your risk of contracting COVID-19. Working people are at increased risk if they frequently interact with potentially infected or infected individuals and work in areas where surface contamination may be.

## **Symptoms and severity of COVID-19 infection.**

Symptoms of fever, cough and trouble breathing may appear 2-14 days after exposure. Reported illness severity has ranged from mild symptoms (including some cases with no reported symptoms) to severe illness and death for confirmed COVID-19 cases. Older people and people of all ages with severe underlying health conditions (e.g., asthma, heart disease, lung disease, cancer and diabetes, etc.) seem to be at higher risk of developing serious COVID-19 illness with current data suggesting older people are twice as likely to develop serious COVID-19 illness.



## This is what to do if you have symptoms of COVID-19 infection

If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop its symptoms of infection, call your healthcare provider immediately and:

- ★ Stay home except to get medical care and separate yourself from other people.
- ★ Wear a medical facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle, going to visit your medical provider).
- ★ Cover your coughs and sneezes with your elbow or with a tissue and throw used tissues into a lined trash can and immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or, if soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- ★ Follow the additional recommendations from the CDC for COVID-19 infected individuals:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/steps-when-sick.html>
- ★ The CDC states that there is no specific antiviral treatment recommended for COVID-19.

## These are practical guidelines to reduce your risk of contracting COVID-19

- ★ Avoid close contact with people who are sick or areas with unfolding outbreaks.
- ★ Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- ★ Cover your cough or sneeze with your elbow or a tissue (throw the tissue in a lined trash can) then wash your hands.
- ★ Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing and before eating or drinking. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- ★ Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaner.
- ★ Follow CDC's recommendations for using a medical facemask if needed. Facemasks should be used

by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others.

- ★ If your employer requires you to wear any Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) they must follow the OSHA's 1910 Subpart I: Personal Protective Equipment standard. This includes proper selection, training, cleaning and storing PPE!
- ★ When selecting disinfectants to clean potentially COVID-19 contaminated surfaces, refer to the *EPA's Registered Antimicrobial Products for Use Against Novel Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2, the Cause of COVID-19* for approved antimicrobial products.

## This is where you can go to learn more about COVID-19

If you are an employer and have questions about what you can do to reduce the risk of COVID-19 in your place of business, visit the CDC webpage on *Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers: Plan, Prepare and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019* at:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>

## You can find greater detailed information on Coronavirus on the following websites.

These sites will update their information and guidance as new information concerning the Coronavirus outbreak becomes available so it is important that you check in regularly for updated information until the outbreak has been considered "ended" by the CDC.

<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19>

<https://www.nih.gov/health-information/coronavirus>

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>



If you have any questions, or need more information, please contact the iFTI at **800-276-7289**.