

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) PREVENTION 101

What is the Coronavirus?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses which may cause illness in animals or humans. In humans, several coronaviruses are known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). The most recently discovered coronavirus causes coronavirus disease COVID-19. This new virus and disease were unknown before the outbreak began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019.

What are the symptoms?

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, tiredness, and dry cough. Some patients may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat or diarrhea. These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually. Some people become infected but don't display any symptoms. Most people (about 80%) recover from the disease without needing special treatment. Around 1 out of every 6 people who contract COVID-19 become seriously ill and develop difficulty breathing. Those more likely to develop a serious illness are older people, and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes. About 96% of people who have died from this disease were in China, and overall about 2% of the people who contracted it have died. People with fever, cough and difficulty breathing should seek medical attention immediately.

How does COVID-19 spread?

People can contract 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 land on objects and surfaces around the person. Other people then contract COVID-19 by touching these objects or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose or mouth. People can also contract COVID-19 if they breathe in droplets from a person with COVID-19 who coughs out or exhales droplets. This is why it is important to stay more than 3 feet away from a person who is sick.

There is no vaccine to prevent coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19). The best way to prevent illness is to avoid exposure to the virus. However, that's not always possible. Here are some preventative actions recommended by the CDC that you can do to help prevent the spread of disease.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

Products with EPA-approved Emerging Viral Pathogens claims are recommended for use against COVID-19.