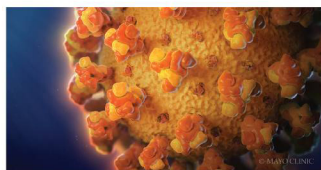


Prepare, prevent and don't panic about COVID-19.

Mayo Clinic is firmly committed to patient safety. We are prepared and ready to respond to patient needs and concerns about the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic.



What you need to know about the COVID-19 (coronavirus)

"Most healthy people who become infected with COVID-19 are going to have mild symptoms and won't have a severe illness." Pritish Tosh, M.D., Infectious Diseases Specialist.

Older people and people with certain underlying health conditions like heart disease, lung disease and diabetes, for example, seem to be at greater risk of serious illness, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

How is COVID-19 transmitted?

COVID-19 is thought to spread similarly to influenza. That is, it spreads person to person through respiratory droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze. These droplets can land on surfaces within approximately 6 feet and can spread to other people after they contact these infected surfaces with their hands and subsequently touch their face.

Can I catch COVID-19 from contact with an object rather than a person?

Yes, you can catch COVID-19 from an object if the surface of that object has live virus on it. How long the virus can live outside an organism is unknown. Expert estimates range from a few hours to up to nine days, depending on the type of surface, surrounding temperature and environment.

Simple ways to protect yourself from coronavirus



Keep your hands clean.

Wash them with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub.



Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.



Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces routinely.



Practice 'respiratory etiquette'

by coughing or sneezing into your elbow or a tissue, and then wash your hands again.



Avoid close contact

with people who are sick.



Stay home if you are sick.

Should I wear a face mask?

If you yourself are sick with fever and cough, you can wear a surgical mask to prevent transmission to other people. If you are healthy, there is not thought to be any additional benefit to wearing a mask yourself because the mask is not airtight and does not necessarily prevent breathing in these tiny, viral particles.

Symptoms

COVID-19 infection may appear 2–14 days after exposure and can include:

Fever

Cough

Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

If you have symptoms call your local health care provider or hospital, and ask how best to be evaluated. Do not go to your health care provider or hospital without calling first.

Produced by Mayo Clinic. Sources: [mayoclinic.org](https://www.mayoclinic.org); [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)



Mayo Clinic is open, committed to being a resource for the state of Minnesota, the United States and the world. Go to Mayo Clinic News Network, [mayoclinic.org/covid19](https://www.mayoclinic.org/covid19), as a trusted source for COVID-19 health information.