Coronavirus Fact Sheet

There are simple things you can do to help keep yourself and others healthy.

1. Wash your hands often with soap (which breaks down the virus’ membrane so it’s extremely effective) and water for at least 20 seconds (the time it takes to sing “Happy Birthday” twice), especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.

2. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

3. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

4. To the extent possible, avoid touching high-touch surfaces in public places – elevator buttons, door handles, handrails, handshaking with people, etc. Use a tissue or your sleeve to cover your hand or finger if you must touch something.

5. Stay home when you are sick.

6. Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

COVID-19 is spread through close contact.

The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. Respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. It may be possible for a person to get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. It is also not a foodborne illness. In other good news, evidence shows that dogs and cats may test positive for coronavirus, but are unlikely to pass it on to their humans.
Some people are at increased risk of getting COVID-19. People who have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or people who live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread are at an increased risk of exposure.

You can help stop COVID-19 by knowing the signs and symptoms (which may appear 2-14 days after exposure):

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

To avoid spreading illness, stay home — and stay away from others — if you have any symptoms. You should restrict activities outside your home, except for getting medical care.

Seek medical advice if you develop symptoms AND have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or live in or have recently traveled from an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19. Call ahead before you go to a doctor’s office or emergency room. Tell them about your recent travel or exposure and your symptoms.

At this time, there is no vaccine to protect against COVID-19 and no medications approved to treat it. Treatment for the virus right now involves addressing the symptoms, including lots of rest and medicine such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) for fever.

Whatever you do, try not to panic. Doctors say most cases of COVID-19 will be mild and resolve on their own, similar to the flu.

Diseases can make anyone sick regardless of their race or ethnicity.

People of Asian descent, including Chinese Americans, are not more likely to get COVID-19 than any other American. Help stop fear by letting people know that being of Asian descent does not increase the chance of getting or spreading COVID-19. A lot of people will not be severely affected by this disease, but there are plenty of people who will. This includes older adults (over the age of 60) and people with chronic medical conditions like heart disease, diabetes and lung disease.

You should also practice social distancing, which means:

- Work from home if possible
- Avoid public transportation
- Steer clear of large crowds
- Keep space between yourself and others and, if necessary, self-isolate.

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**FAQ**

**Should I cancel my travel?**

Travel restrictions are changing by the day. Some flights are getting canceled, and you can also check with your airline to see if your flight is at risk of being canceled. A lot of the airlines are overwhelmed right now, so getting in touch on the phone might take a while. If you have a week or more before your flight, don't panic. Airlines are proactively sending information about the status of flights – or instructions for how to cancel – a few days in advance.

The CDC provides recommendations on whether to postpone or cancel travel based on high-risk areas. A list of destinations with travel notices is available here. Because COVID-19 can be more serious in older adults and those with chronic medical conditions, people in these groups should talk to a healthcare provider.

If it’s reasonable to use an alternative means of traveling, such as by car, that would be the preferred option. And if you’re part of a high-risk group – you’re older and/or have a compromised immune system – or the people you’re visiting include a high-risk individuals you don’t want to potentially expose, it’s probably best to call off the trip.

If you must travel by airplane, remember to wipe down arm rests, seat back tables, light switches and vent knobs before touching them.

**Should I work from home if I can?**

As the number of COVID-19 cases increase, more U.S employers in technology and other industries are encouraging or preparing their employees to work remotely for an indefinite period. If you can work from home, please do. Check with your manager first, and in the meantime, here are some tips if you do end up working remotely.

**Should I wear a face mask?**

If you’re not sick, there is no need to wear a face mask. Reports show there’s already a shortage of masks, which health care workers and those who are dealing with an illness do need. Plus, casual use of a face mask may not even do much anyway.

**Can I still eat at restaurants, go to the movies, etc.?**

Considering that the goal right now is to limit our exposure to large crowds and places where many people congregate, entertainment and nonessential activities should really be avoided completely. Movie theaters and restaurants, for instance, hold a large number of people. Several cities have already shut down these types of venues, and experts highly recommended that we reduce our contact with other humans.

**Source:** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and HuffPost

**For more on COVID-19, check out coverage below:**

- A Few Coronavirus Facts To Keep In Mind When You're Panicking
- Here's The Difference Between Coronavirus And Flu Symptoms
- How To Get Your Kids To Stop Touching Their Faces
- Can Coronavirus Be Transmitted Through Food? Here's What You Should Know.
- 30 Parents Share Their Favorite At-Home Activities To Help Bored Kids