

## Stopping the Spread of COVID-19

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is the infectious disease caused by a novel coronavirus.

### What Is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a respiratory infection caused by the virus SARS-CoV-2, which was recently discovered after an outbreak began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. SARS-CoV-2 is a type of coronavirus, which is a large family of viruses that cause illnesses ranging from the common cold to more severe infections in humans.

COVID-19 causes a variety of symptoms in people who are infected, and not all people infected with COVID-19 will have the same symptoms. Fever, dry cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, or body aches are some of the most common symptoms; however, some people have experienced headache, abdominal pain, diarrhea, and sore throat as well. Symptoms typically appear 2 to 14 days after exposure, although some patients may not develop symptoms until later.

### How Is It spread?

Current evidence suggests that the virus can be spread through respiratory droplets after an infected person coughs or sneezes, between people who are within about 6 feet of each other, and possibly through touching surfaces that have the virus on them, such as handrails, telephones, or doorknobs.

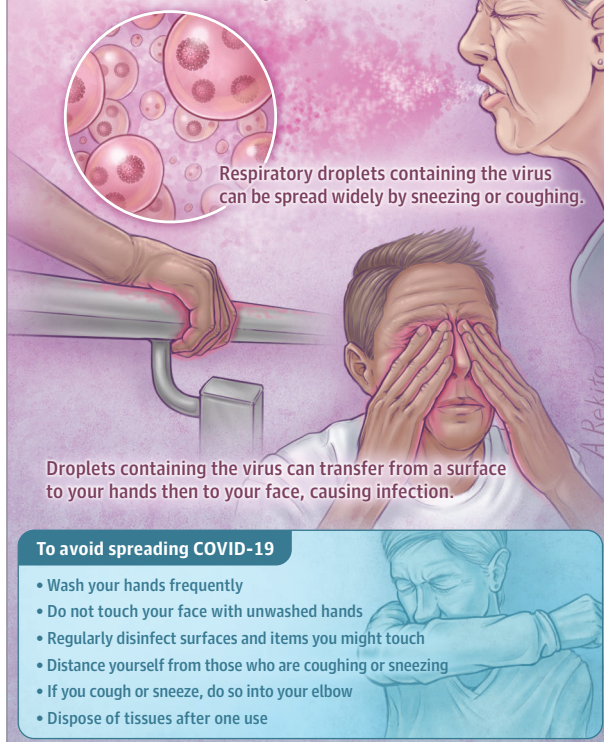
### How Can I Prevent Infection Acquisition?

Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water or hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol often (especially after touching common surface areas, using the bathroom, shaking hands, and other social interactions). Avoid large crowds, crowded public places, and maintain at least 6 feet of distance between yourself and others, especially if they are coughing or sneezing. This is known as **social distancing**. If you are older or have underlying medical problems, take extra care to avoid these situations, including nonessential air travel or cruises. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands, because contaminated hands can transfer virus to these areas and make you sick. If you are sneezing or coughing, cover your mouth and dispose of tissues after used once. Avoid shaking hands when greeting others. Disinfect surfaces that are used regularly, using household sprays or wipes. Unless you have respiratory symptoms, are a health care worker, or are in close contact with or caring for someone with COVID-19, wearing a medical mask is not indicated. Wearing gloves in public is not effective protection from COVID-19, because

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COVID-19 is a respiratory infection caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, commonly called coronavirus. It causes various symptoms including fever, dry cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, and body aches that usually appear 2-14 days after exposure.

The virus can be spread via droplets from infected persons coughing or sneezing, and via contact with surfaces that have the virus-containing droplets on them.



gloves can be contaminated. Frequently washing your hands is the best way to protect yourself and your loved ones.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
<https://www.cdc.gov>

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**Sources:** Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) advice for the public. <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

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