

FACT SHEET

COVID-19

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a disease caused by a virus called SARS-CoV-2. Most people that get COVID-19 have mild symptoms, but some become very sick. Older adults and people with certain underlying medical conditions are more likely to get very sick. Post-COVID conditions are a wide range of health problems people can have four or more weeks after catching COVID-19, regardless of how sick they were initially.

How is COVID-19 spread?

COVID-19 is spread in three main ways:

1. Breathing in air when close to an infected person who is breathing out small droplets and particles that have virus in them.
2. Having these small droplets and particles land on the eyes, nose, or mouth, especially from a cough or sneeze.
3. Touching eyes, nose, or mouth with hands that have virus on them.

What are the symptoms?

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat

- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

How can COVID-19 be prevented?

To protect yourself and others:

- Stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines; it can keep you from getting very sick
- Avoid poorly ventilated spaces and crowds
- Move activities/gatherings outdoors or improve the ventilation in indoor spaces
- Wear a well-fitting mask or respirator
- Stay 6 feet away from others, especially when indoors
- Wash your hands often and cover coughs and sneezes
- Clean and disinfect highly touched surfaces

How is COVID-19 treated?

If you test positive and are older or at high risk of getting very sick from COVID-19, treatment may be available. Monoclonal antibody treatments could help the immune system recognize and respond more effectively to the virus. Oral antiviral medications that target specific parts of the SARS-CoV-2 virus can help reduce its multiplication and spread through the patient's body. Severe disease may require hospitalization.

This fact sheet is for informational purposes only and is not intended for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider. For more information contact your health care provider or visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov.