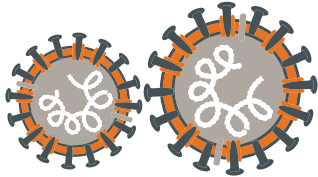# Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

Q. What are coronaviruses?

A: Human coronaviruses were first identified in the mid-1960s. They are a respiratory virus named for the crown-like spikes on their surface. We are currently aware of seven different types of human coronaviruses, four of which are associated with mild to moderate upper-respiratory tract illnesses, like the common cold. Other types of the virus include severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome, (MERS) and Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), which is responsible for the latest outbreak. Although COVID-19 is similar to the other types of coronaviruses, it is unique in many ways and we are still learning more each day.

Q. How do you get infected with COVID-19?

A: COVID-19 is spread by close person-to-person contact from droplets from a cough or sneeze, which can get into your mouth, nose, or lungs. Close contact is defined as being within approximately 6 feet of another person. There aren't many cases in the U.S., so the risk of contracting COVID-19 is low.

Q. How do I know if I have COVID-19?

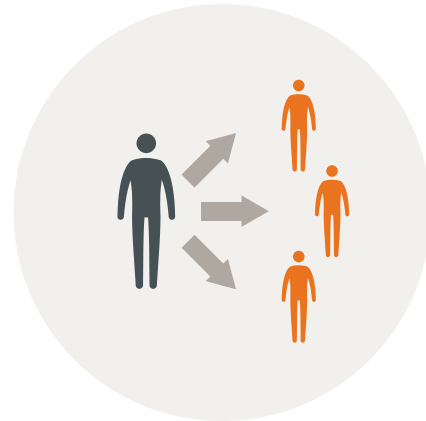A: If you were recently exposed to someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19 or have been in a place where an outbreak has occurred within the last two weeks the following symptoms could indicate you have contracted COVID-19:

- fever;

- cough; or

- shortness of breath.

Unless your symptoms are severe, it is recommended you call your healthcare provider first before entering a healthcare facility. When speaking with a healthcare provider in-person or on the phone, be sure to note your symptoms, travel history, or if you were exposed to a person diagnosed with the virus.

Q. How severe is this illness?

A: The World Health Organization says 80% of people with COVID-19 have a mild form of the illness with cold- or flulike symptoms. The people most likely to get seriously ill from this virus are people over 60 and/or those with pre-existing health conditions. It is estimated that for every 100 cases of COVID-19, between two and four people would die. This is very different from a coronavirus like SARS, where nearly ten in 100 sick people died from the illness.

Q. I see people wearing masks, should I be doing that?

A: Health officials in the U.S. do not recommend the use of masks among people not showing symptoms of COVID-19. People in places where spread is more likely, may have been instructed to wear masks to prevent infecting others and to possibly prevent getting ill from close contact in crowded places.

Q. What can I do to prevent getting sick from COVID-19?

A: The following tips will help to prevent COVID-19 as well as other respiratory viruses:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

- Don't touch your eyes, nose, or mouth, especially with unwashed hands.

- Avoid close contact with people who are showing symptoms of illness.

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

- Cover your cough or sneezes with a tissue or sneeze into your elbow. Throw the tissue in the garbage and make sure to clean your hands afterwards.

- Stay home when you are sick.

Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

Spreads

Through close personal contact with a sick person.

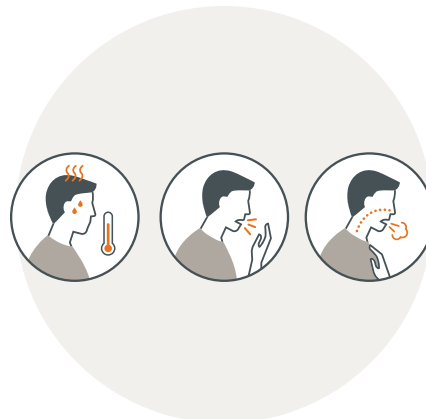SYMPTOMS MAY SHOW UP
2-14 DAYS LATER

Symptoms

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Call your healthcare provider if:

- You have symptoms and have been to a country that has experienced an outbreak within the last 2 weeks of your travel.
- You have symptoms and have been in close contact with a person with a confirmed case of COVID-19.

Prevention

- Wash your hands often.
- Cover your cough/sneeze with a tissue.
- Don't touch your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces often.
- Stay home when you are sick.

Dignity Health®