

Current understanding about how the virus that causes the Coronavirus disease 19 (COVID-19) spreads is largely based on what is known about similar coronaviruses. COVID-19 is a new disease and there is more to learn about how it spreads, the severity of illness it causes, and to what extent it may spread in the United States. The information for the FAQs was researched from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), World Health Organization (WHO), and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH).

Q: How does it spread from person to person?

A: The virus is thought to spread mainly from person to person by people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) and through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

Q: Can the coronavirus spread from contact with infected surfaces or objects?

A: 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 your mouth or nose and possibly your eyes. This is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

Q: Can someone spread the virus without being sick?

A: People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic or the sickest. Some spread might be possible before people show symptoms; there have been reports of this occurring with the new coronavirus, but it is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

Q: How many days does it take before people infected with the Coronavirus become sick and develop a fever?

A: Between 2 and 10 days.

Q: Should I be wearing a mask?

A: Only if you are caring or treating someone directly with the Coronavirus.

Q: Does the new Coronavirus affect only older people or are younger people also susceptible?

A: People of all ages can be affected by the new coronavirus (Covid-2019). Older people and people with pre-existing medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes, and heart disease appear to be more vulnerable to becoming severely ill with the virus. The WHO advises people of all ages to take steps to protect themselves from the virus by following good handwashing and good respiratory hygiene (use a tissue once and throw away, sneeze into your elbow).

Q: Are antibiotics effective in preventing and treating the new coronavirus?

A: No, antibiotics do not work against virus, only bacteria. The new coronavirus is a virus and therefore antibiotics should not be used as a means of prevention or treatment. However, people hospitalized may receive antibiotics since a bacterial co-infection is possible.

Q: Are there any specific medicines to prevent or treat the new coronavirus?

A: To date, there are no specific medicines recommended to prevent or treat the new coronavirus. People infected with the virus should receive appropriate care to relieve and treat symptoms and those with severe illness should receive optimized supportive care. The WHO is helping accelerate research and development of efforts with partners.

Q: How effective are thermal scanners in detecting people infected with the new coronavirus?

A: Thermal scanners are effective in detecting people who have developed a fever.

Q: How should we protect each other from getting sick?

A: When coughing or sneezing, cover your mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue. Throw tissue into a closed bin immediately after use and clean hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water after coughing or sneezing and when caring for the sick.

Wash your hands with soap and running water when hands are visibly dirty and if your hands are not visibly dirty, frequently clean them by using alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.

Q: What should I disinfect surfaces with?

A: A cleaner with alcohol and bleach can be used to disinfect surfaces. Do not use this on your body or clothes. Surfaces and objects such as desks, keyboards, and phones need to be wiped with disinfectant regularly.

Q: What are the symptoms for COVID-19?

A: Reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death for confirmed coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases. The following symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure.

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Q: Can pets spread the Coronavirus?

A: At present, per the World Health Organization, there is no evidence that companion animals such as dogs or (WHO however stresses it is a good idea to wash your hands with soap and water after contact with pets.