

# **2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19): Frequently Asked Questions**



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## **What is COVID-19?**

COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus. This new virus and disease were unknown before the outbreak began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019.

## **What are the symptoms of COVID-19?**

The most common symptoms of COVID are fever, coughing, and difficulty breathing, but may include other symptoms.

## **How does COVID-19 spread?**

People get COVID-19 from others who have the virus. The disease can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth which are spread when a person with COVID-19 coughs or exhales. These droplets land on objects and surfaces around the person. Other people catch COVID-19 by touching these objects or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose, or mouth. People can also catch COVID-19 if they breathe in droplets from a person with COVID-19 who coughs out or exhales droplets. This is why it is important to stay a minimum of 2 meters away from others whenever possible.

## **How do I protect myself?**

- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub
- Maintain at least 2 meters between yourself and anyone, especially those who may be coughing or sneezing
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth
- Sneeze in the bend of your elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw away tissue right away and wash your hands immediately

- Stay at home if you feel unwell
- Stay hydrated, drink plenty of water
- Keep surfaces clean using regular household disinfectants, especially “high touch” areas like door handles, phones, light switches, etc.

### **What does social distancing mean?**

Social distancing is proven to be one of the most effective ways to reduce the spread of illness during an outbreak

- Limit contact with anyone outside the people you live with
- Do not attend gatherings or social events
- If you have to be out in public or away from your home, ensure:
  - you practice good hand hygiene
  - make outings short (for example, if you need to buy supplies, have a list, limit the number of stores you need to attend)
  - try and maintain a distance of 2metres from others
- Only have visitors you must see and keep visits short
- Keep away from seniors and people with chronic medical conditions such as diabetes, lung problems, immune deficiency

### **What does self-isolating mean?**

- Staying at home
- Avoid contact with others as much as possible – stay in separate rooms
- Keep good airflow- open windows
- Going outside is okay as long as you are keeping distance away from others
- Asking neighbours or family members who are not self-isolating to go to grocery store or pharmacy for you
- If you have been ordered to isolate you will be given additional instructions

### **What does self-monitoring mean?**

Monitoring yourself for symptoms of COVID-19 like coughing, fever, difficulty breathing, or other symptoms.

**Is there a vaccine to protect against this virus?**

Not yet. To date there is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The influenza vaccine will not protect you against COVID-19.

**What is the treatment for COVID-19?**

Most people with COVID-19 will recover on their own.

Antibiotics are not effective because COVID-19 is a viral infection and not bacterial.

Supportive treatments may include medication to reduce fever at home, and in more severe cases supplemental oxygen or the use of respirators for patients that require hospitalization.

Your Community Health Nurse will help you monitor symptoms and support you in accessing care for symptoms that worsen.

**How do I know I have COVID-19?**

COVID-19 is diagnosed by health care provider based on your symptoms and confirmed by laboratory tests. If you are concerned about symptoms or risk for COVID-19, consult with your Community Health Nurse or Telehealth and we will support you in accessing further assessment.

**Your Community Health Nurse is available to answer any questions and provide additional information call 274-2042**

**Telehealth Ontario is also available 24/7 at 1-866-797-0000**