

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

## 2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS

### What is novel coronavirus (COVID-19)?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that cause diseases of varying severities, ranging from the common cold to more severe respiratory diseases. This is a novel (new) coronavirus because it is a strain of coronavirus that has not been previously identified in humans.

### How is coronavirus spread?

Like other respiratory illnesses, such as influenza, human coronaviruses most commonly spread to others from an infected person who has symptoms through:

- Droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes;
- Close personal contact, such as caring for an infected person; and
- Touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes before washing your hands.

### What are the symptoms?

People who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 have reported symptoms that may appear in as few as 2 days or as long as 14 days after exposure to the virus:



### How is novel coronavirus treated?

There is no specific treatment for illness caused by a novel coronavirus. However, many of the symptoms can be treated. Treatment will be based on the patient's condition. There is no vaccine for novel coronavirus.

### How can I prevent from getting this novel coronavirus?

Activities that can prevent the spread of more common respiratory infections, like the flu, can be effective at preventing the spread of novel coronavirus, such as:

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- Stay home when you are sick, except to seek medical care.
  - Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and help young children do the same. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
  - Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
  - Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
  - Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. If you do not have a tissue, use your sleeve (not your hands).

### Key Points:

- Novel coronavirus is a new virus that hasn't been identified before in humans
- Coronaviruses can be spread through close personal contact, or by touching an object of surface with the virus in it
- Use common prevention measures like handwashing and routine cleaning to help prevent novel coronavirus
- DCHHS is taking steps to prevent the spread of coronavirus in Dallas County

### FOR MORE INFO:

**Dallas County Health and Human Services:**  
<https://www.dallascounty.org/departments/dchhs/2019-novel-coronavirus.php>

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):**  
<http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/novel-coronavirus-2019.html>

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### FAQs if you are sick with coronavirus or suspect you may be sick with coronavirus

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#### **What should I do if I travelled abroad and got sick?**

If you have recently traveled abroad and feel sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, please seek medical care right away. Before you go to a doctor's office or emergency room, call ahead and tell them about your recent travel and your symptoms. They will give you instructions on how to get care without exposing other people to your illness. While sick, avoid contact with people, don't go out, and delay any travel plans you have to reduce the possibility of spreading the illness.

#### **I have a confirmed or suspected case of coronavirus. What steps should I take to prevent this coronavirus from spreading to people in my home and community?**

Here are some steps you can take to prevent the spread of the coronavirus:

- **Stay home except to get medical care.** Do not go to work, school, or public areas. Do not use public transportation, ride shares, or taxis.
- **Separate yourself from other people in your home.** As much as possible, you should stay in another room away from people in your home and use another bathroom.
- **Wear a facemask.** You should wear a facemask when you are around other people or pets and before you enter a healthcare provider's office.
- **Cover your coughs and sneezes.** Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze. Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- **Clean your hands often.** Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains 60 to 95% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry.
- **Avoid sharing household items.** You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding, or other items with other people in your home. After using items, you should wash them thoroughly with soap and water.
- **Monitor your symptoms.** Get medical care quickly if your symptoms get worse. Call the doctor's office or emergency room ahead of time and tell them that you have been evaluated, or are being evaluated for coronavirus infection.