

CORONAVIRUS

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the coronavirus?

“Coronavirus” refers to a large family of viruses. However, the specific virus being referenced in media reports is a novel (or new) type of coronavirus that had not been previously identified.

Is the coronavirus like the common cold?

There are several types of coronavirus. The virus causing coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is not the same type that commonly circulates and causes mild illness like the common cold.

How does it spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 is spreading person-to-person. For that reason, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends patients with the coronavirus be isolated either in a hospital or at home until they recover and no longer pose a risk of infecting others.

What are the symptoms?

Current symptoms reported for patients with COVID-19 have included mild to severe respiratory illness with fever, cough and difficulty breathing. It is believed that symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure.

Is it dangerous?

The complete clinical picture with regard to COVID-19 is not fully understood, but reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death. This is a rapidly evolving situation. For the latest information, visit www.cdc.gov.

What is the risk for our area?

For the general American public, the immediate health risk is considered low. However, healthcare workers and travelers returning from certain locations are at an elevated risk of exposure. For a complete list of countries currently affected, visit www.cdc.gov.

How is it treated?

There is currently no vaccine to prevent the coronavirus, and no specific treatment. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid exposure. The CDC does not recommend wearing face masks unless you are sick. They are not an effective way for a healthy person to avoid the virus.

What steps can I take to avoid exposure?

There are several simple, everyday actions you can take to help prevent the spread of illness:

- » Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- » Stay home when you are sick, unless you have called your doctor and been instructed to receive medical care
- » Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue
- » Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects daily
- » Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds

How can I make sure I have the latest information?

This is a rapidly evolving situation. For the latest information on the coronavirus and COVID-19, visit www.cdc.gov.