

COVID 19 Frequently asked questions-

How is COVID -19 spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 most commonly spreads between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet, or 2 arm lengths).

It spreads through respiratory droplets or small particles, such as those in aerosols, produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, sings, talks, or breathes.

These particles can be inhaled into the nose, mouth, airways, and lungs and cause infection. This is thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

Droplets can also land on surfaces and objects and be transferred by touch. A person may get COVID-19 by touching the surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes. Spread from touching surfaces is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

It is possible that COVID-19 may spread through the droplets and airborne particles that are formed when a person who has COVID-19 coughs, sneezes, sings, talks, or breathes. There is growing evidence that droplets and airborne particles can remain suspended in the air and be breathed in by others, and travel distances beyond 6 feet (for example, during choir practice, in restaurants, or in fitness classes). In general, indoor environments without good ventilation increase this risk.

What is Community Spread?

Community spread means people have been infected with the virus in an area, including some who are not sure how or where they became infected. Each health department determines community spread differently based on local conditions.

Does CDC recommend the use of masks to prevent COVID 19?

Wear masks in public settings when around people not living in your household and particularly where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain, such as grocery stores, pharmacies, and gas stations. Masks may slow the spread of the virus and help people who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting it to others.

COVID-19 can be spread by people who do not have symptoms and do not know that they are infected. That's why it's important for everyone to practice social distancing (staying at least 6 feet away from other people) and wear masks in public settings. Masks provide an extra layer to help prevent the respiratory droplets from traveling in the air and onto other people.

What should I do if I get sick or someone in my house gets sick?

Most people who get COVID-19 will be able to recover at home. CDC has directions for people who are recovering at home and their caregivers, including:

- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Use a separate room and bathroom for sick household members (if possible).
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- Provide your sick household member with clean disposable facemasks to wear at home, if available, to help prevent spreading COVID-19 to others.
- Clean the sick room and bathroom, as needed, to avoid unnecessary contact with the sick person.

What should you do if you had close contact with someone with COVID 19?

- Stay home for 14 days after your last contact with a person who has COVID-19.
- Be alert for symptoms. Watch for fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19.
- If possible, stay away from others, especially people who are at higher risk for getting very sick from COVID-19.

What is contact tracing?

Contact tracing has been used for decades by state and local health departments to slow or stop the spread of infectious diseases.

Contact tracing slows the spread of COVID-19 by

- Letting people know they may have been exposed to COVID-19 and should monitor their health for signs and symptoms of COVID-19
- Helping people who may have been exposed to COVID-19 get tested
- Asking people to self-isolate if they have COVID-19 or self-quarantine if they are a close contact of someone with COVID-19

During contact tracing, the health department staff **WILL NOT** ask you for

Money

Social Security number

Bank account information

Salary information

Credit card numbers

Who is considered a close contact to someone with COVID 19?

For COVID-19, a close contact is anyone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes. An infected person can spread COVID-19 starting 48 hours (or 2 days) before the person has any symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19.

Am I considered a close contact if I was wearing a mask?

Yes, you are still considered a close contact even if you were wearing a mask while you were around someone with COVID-19. Masks are meant to protect other people in case you are infected, and not to protect you from becoming infected.

If I'm a close contact, will I be tested for COVID 19?

If you have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, you should be tested, even if you do not have symptoms of COVID-19. The health department may be able to provide resources for testing in your area.

-While you are waiting for your COVID-19 test result, stay home away from others (self-quarantine) and monitor your health for symptoms of COVID-19 to protect your friends, family, and others from possibly getting COVID-19.

-If your test is positive, you should continue to stay home and self-isolate away from others and monitor your health. If you have symptoms of COVID-19 and they worsen or become severe, you should seek emergency medical care. Severe symptoms include trouble breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, or bluish lips or face. Someone from the health department may call you to

-Check on your health,

-Discuss who you have been around, and

-Ask where you have spent time while you may have been able to spread COVID-19 to others.

If your test is negative and you don't have symptoms, you should continue to stay home and self-quarantine away from others for 14 days after your last exposure to COVID-19 and follow all recommendations from the health department. This is important because symptoms can appear up to 14 days after you've been exposed and are infected. A negative result before the end of your quarantine period does not rule out possible infection. Additionally, you do not need a repeat test unless you develop symptoms, or if you require a test to return to work.

If your test is negative and you have symptoms, you should continue to self-quarantine away from others for 14 days after your last exposure to COVID-19 and follow all recommendations from the health department. Additional medical consultation and a second test may be needed if your symptoms do not improve.