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COVID-19 (formerly 2019 novel coronavirus)

What is COVID-19?

The COVID-19 is a virus strain that has only spread in people since December 2019. Health experts are concerned because little is known about this new virus and it has the potential to cause severe illness and pneumonia in some people

How does COVID-19 spread?

Health experts are still learning the details about how this new coronavirus spreads. Other coronaviruses spread from an infected person to others through:

- the air by coughing and sneezing
- close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands
- touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes
- in rare cases, contact with feces

How severe is COVID-19?

Experts are still learning about the range of illness from COVID-19. Reported cases have ranged from mild illness (similar to a common cold) to severe pneumonia that requires hospitalization. So far, deaths have been reported mainly in older adults who had other health conditions.

What are the symptoms?

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

Fever



Cough



Difficulty
Breathing



Who is at risk for COVID-19?

Currently, the risk to the general public is low. At this time, there are a small number of individual cases in the U.S. To minimize the risk of spread, health officials are working with healthcare providers to promptly identify and evaluate any suspected cases.

Travelers to and from certain areas of the world may be at increased risk. See wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel for the latest travel guidance from the CDC.

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How to prevent getting COVID-19

If you are traveling overseas (to China but also to other places), follow the CDC's guidance: wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel.

Right now, the COVID-19 has not been spreading widely in the United States, so there are no additional precautions recommended for the general public. Steps you can take to prevent the spread of flu and the common cold will also help prevent COVID-19:

- wash hands often with soap and water. If not available, use hand sanitizer.
- avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
- avoid contact with people who are sick
- stay home while you are sick and avoid close contact with others
- cover your mouth/nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing



Other steps you can do to protect yourself and your family:

- clean surfaces and objects that are touched frequently, including desks, doorknobs, railings, computer keyboards, phones, and toys.
- stay informed about the local COVID-19 situation
- keep informed about your child's school and childcare attendance policies
- know your employer's sick-leave policy

Currently, there are no vaccines available to prevent COVID-19 infections.

How is COVID-19 treated?

There are no medications specifically approved for COVID-19. Most people with mild COVID-19 illness will recover on their own by drinking plenty of fluids, resting, and taking pain and fever medications. However, some cases develop pneumonia and require medical care or hospitalization.

Stigma Related to COVID-19

Stigma and discrimination can occur when people associate an infectious disease, such as COVID-19, with a population or nationality, even though not everyone in that population or from that region is specifically at risk for the disease (for example, Chinese-Americans and other Asian-Americans living in the United States).

Stigma hurts everyone by creating more fear or anger towards ordinary people instead of the disease that is causing the problem. We can fight stigma and help not hurt others by providing social support. We can communicate the facts that being Chinese or Asian American does not increase the chance of getting or spreading COVID-19.

People—including those of Asian descent—who have not recently traveled to China or been in contact with a person who is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 are not at greater risk of acquiring and spreading COVID-19 than other Americans.

For more information:

City of St. Louis Department of Health:

www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/health/communicable-disease/covid-19/index.cfm

Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services: www.health.mo.gov/coronavirus

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/