Coronavirus Disease 2019

Ohio | **Department of Health**

FAQs

Q: What is coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)?

A: COVID-19, or coronavirus disease 2019, is respiratory disease caused by one of the seven coronaviruses known to infect humans. It was first identified in humans in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, in December 2019. The virus that causes COVID-19 is called SARS-CoV-2.

Q: Why am I at risk?

A: There is community spread across Ohio, meaning you can pick up the virus that causes COVID-19 from people you know or from out in your community from unknown sources, much like you catch the flu.

Q: What are the symptoms?

A: Symptoms, which generally appear two to 14 days after exposure, include fever, cough, and difficulty breathing. Most people who become sick do not require hospitalization, but older adults, people with chronic health conditions, and people with compromised immune systems are more likely to require more advanced care.

Q: How does it spread?

A: COVID-19 is believed to spread mainly from person-to-person between people who are in close contact (within about 6 feet) with one another and through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It also may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

Q: What can I do to prevent it?

A: There are no vaccines to prevent COVID-19. Unless you are in an essential work category, stay home except for medical care or household necessities. Use the personal prevention protection methods shown in the graphic below. Clean high-touch areas — counters, tables, doorknobs, light switches, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, nightstands — often, using household cleaning spray or wipes according to label directions.

Q: Why have the Ohio governor and health director ordered residents to stay home and shut down schools, businesses, and other services and ordered residents to stay home?

A: Preventing the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 and preventing deaths will take us all working together to limit exposure to as few people as possible. While most people who contract COVID-19 will recover, they can pass the disease on to two or three other people, sometimes without even knowing it. If COVID-19 cases continue to increase, healthcare providers could become overwhelmed and run out of supplies to protect themselves and treat patients — not just COVID-19 patients, but also others. For details on the stay-at-home order, look [here](#).

Q: Can I go outside?

A: Yes. The order does not prohibit you from going outside or to a park for a walk or exercise, but try to stay 6 feet away from others you encounter. The order also does not prohibit going to cemeteries or to funerals or weddings.

Q: What if I still have to go to work?

A: Whenever possible stay at least 6 feet from other people. Wash your hands often, try not to touch your face, and frequently disinfect your work area with disinfecting cleanser. Additional tips are found in the graphic below.

Q: What should I do if I get sick?

A: Call a healthcare professional if you develop a fever and/or symptoms of respiratory illness, such as coughing or shortness of breath. Older people, people with underlying medical conditions, and people with compromised immune symptoms should contact a healthcare provider early. If you experience severe symptoms (e.g., persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion or inability to arouse, bluish lips or face, or other concerning symptoms), contact a healthcare provider or emergency department and seek care immediately.

Q: Should I get tested?

A: Testing supplies are limited all around the country. The vast majority of people who get sick with COVID-19 do not need testing. Currently, testing is limited to Ohioans who are the sickest, the most at risk of developing severe symptoms, and professionals who provide care for the ill. This will allow providers to immediately and aggressively act to treat these at-risk patients and to take safety precautions to prevent spread of the disease. Testing is not recommended for people without symptoms or people who have mild-to-moderate symptoms and NO risk factors for becoming seriously ill.

Q: Is food safe? Can I get COVID-19 from a person who handles my food?

A: Currently there is no evidence of food or food packaging being associated with transmission of COVID-19. However, the virus that causes COVID-19 can spread from person-to-person. Food workers

who are sick should stay home until they no longer pose a risk of infecting others. Anyone handling, preparing, or serving food should always follow safe food handling procedures, such as washing hands and surfaces often. It is also critical to follow the [four key steps of food safety](#) — clean, separate, cook, and chill — to prevent foodborne illness.

Q: What should I do if I experience price gouging or scams?

A: Scammers are trying to monopolize on the fear and uncertainty that COVID-19 has brought to so many. Watch out for claims of products or medications that can prevent or treat COVID-19 or anyone asking for your personal or banking information. If you suspect any unfair or deceptive sales practices, contact the office of Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost at www.OhioProtects.org or 1-800-282-0515.See more on this issue [here](#).

Q: Can I get COVID-19 from my pet? If I'm sick, can I make my pet sick?

A: At this time, there is no reason to believe that animals, including pets, in the U.S. might be a source of COVID-19. To date, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has not received any reports of pets or other animals becoming sick with COVID-19 in the U.S.

For additional information, visit [coronavirus.ohio.gov](#).

For answers to your COVID-19 questions, call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634).

If you or a loved one are experiencing anxiety related to the coronavirus pandemic, help is available. Call the Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990 (1-800-846-8517 TTY); connect with a trained counselor through the Ohio Crisis Text Line by texting the keyword "4HOPE" to 741 741; or call the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services help line at 1-877-275-6364 to find resources in your community.

Document updated March 24, 2020, with information from ODH, CDC, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Additional FAQs can be found at the CDC website [here](#) and the FDA website [here](#).
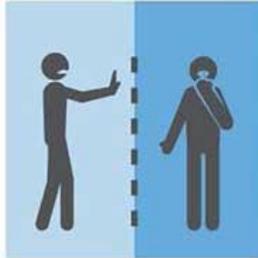
For more information, visit: [coronavirus.ohio.gov](#)

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019

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Protect yourself and others from COVID-19 by taking these precautions.

PREVENTION

For additional information call **1-833-4-ASK-ODH** or visit **coronavirus.ohio.gov.**
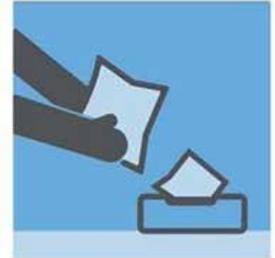
STAY HOME

PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING

GET ADEQUATE SLEEP AND EAT WELL-BALANCED MEALS

WASH HANDS OFTEN WITH WATER AND SOAP (20 SECONDS OR LONGER)

DRY HANDS WITH A CLEAN TOWEL OR AIR DRY YOUR HANDS

COVER YOUR MOUTH WITH A TISSUE OR SLEEVE WHEN COUGHING OR SNEEZING

AVOID TOUCHING YOUR EYES, NOSE, OR MOUTH WITH UNWASHED HANDS OR AFTER TOUCHING SURFACES

CLEAN AND DISINFECT "HIGH-TOUCH" SURFACES OFTEN

CALL BEFORE VISITING YOUR DOCTOR

PRACTICE GOOD HYGIENE HABITS

For more information, visit: coronavirus.ohio.gov