

## 1. What is COVID-19?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus that was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China. **For the latest information, go to [CDC COVID-19 website](#).**

## 2. What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms which include:

- Fever (100.4 degrees or higher)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Diarrhea
- Some people can have severe complications.
- CDC believes at this time that symptoms may appear in as few as 2 days or as long as 14 days after exposure to the virus.

## 3. How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly from person to person, mainly through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. Spread is more likely when people are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet). See [CDC How COVID-19 Spreads](#).

## 4. How can I help protect myself?

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19 infection. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus. However, you should follow these everyday actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses.

- **Wash your hands often and correctly** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
  - [Watch this excellent video](#), share these [great materials](#) and [safely use hand sanitizer](#)
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth** with unwashed hands.
- **Avoid close contact** with people who are sick.
- **Cover** your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash, and wash your hands with soap and running water after touching the tissue. If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow not your hands.
- **Clean** and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects (for example: tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks). See [Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Home](#) and it is recommended to use [EPA-registered household disinfectants](#). Follow the instructions on the label (such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use) to ensure safe and effective use of the product.
- **Wear a face covering** (see Question #5).
- **Practice Social Distancing** (see Question #10)
- See the [CDC Checklist for Individuals and Families](#) and
- [Get Your Home Ready](#) - Have a plan and know what to do if someone in your household becomes ill with COVID-19 symptoms

## 5. Should I wear a face covering?

- Effective at 8 p.m. on Friday, April 17, 2020 any individual in NY State who is over age two and able to medically tolerate a face-covering shall be required to cover their nose and mouth with a mask or cloth face-covering when in a public place and unable to maintain, or when not maintaining, social distance. Remember that wearing a face covering does not mean you can ignore other precautions – we still direct all New Yorkers to stay at home for all but essential errands. It is important that you read all applicable components of the Executive Orders to have a complete understanding of the implications. See <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/no-20217-continuing-temporary-suspension-and-modification-laws-relating-disaster-emergency>
- See [https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/04/doh\\_covid19\\_eo20217-20218publicfacecovering\\_041720.pdf](https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/04/doh_covid19_eo20217-20218publicfacecovering_041720.pdf) (April 17, 2020)
- See [How to Make and Wear a Cloth Face Covering](#).
- See [How to Put On & Take Off a Face Covering](#).
- See How to don and doff a mask <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yl60UEp57jQ>

## 6. What should I do if I have been in contact with someone that has symptoms of COVID-19, which include any of the following: fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, cough,

shortness of breath, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, diarrhea, new loss of taste or smell?

Call your medical provider

**7. What should I do if I get symptoms of COVID-19, which include any of the following: fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, cough, shortness of breath, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, diarrhea, new loss of taste or smell?**

If you develop symptoms:

- Most people with COVID-19 have **mild illness** and are able to recover at home.
- **Remain at home** and away from others in your household (See Question #9.)
- **Call** your physician and describe your symptoms. Do not go directly to their office or to an emergency department/urgent care center without calling first. If you feel you are having a medical emergency, call 911 immediately and let them know your symptoms.
- **Cover** your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash, and wash your hands with soap and running water after touching the tissue. If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow not your hands.
- **Wash your hands frequently** with soap and running water for at least 20 seconds.
- **Clean** and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects (for example: tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks). See [Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Home](#) and it is recommended to use [EPA-registered household disinfectants](#). Follow the instructions on the label (such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use) to ensure safe and effective use of the product.
- **Avoid** sharing personal household items
- Wear a **face covering** (See Question #5).
- [Steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick](#) (CDC)
- [10 things you can do to manage your health at home](#) (CDC)

**8. When can [Essential Employees](#) return to work after they have been infected with or exposed to COVID-19?**

- Adult Care Facilities and Nursing Home Guidance <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/protecting-public-health-all-new-yorkers>
- Health Advisory: Updated Protocols for Personnel in Healthcare and Other Direct Care Settings to Return to Work Following COVID-19 Exposure or Infection [https://oasas.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/04/doh\\_covid19\\_healthcarepersonnelreturntowork\\_033120.pdf](https://oasas.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/04/doh_covid19_healthcarepersonnelreturntowork_033120.pdf)

- Protocols for **Essential Personnel Other than those in Healthcare and Other Direct Care Settings** to Return to Work Following COVID-19 Exposure or Infection (Updated 03/31/2020) [https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/04/doh\\_covid19\\_essentialpersonnelreturntowork\\_rev2\\_033120.pdf](https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/04/doh_covid19_essentialpersonnelreturntowork_rev2_033120.pdf)

## 9. What are social distancing recommendations and guidelines?

- **Staying home will save lives and protects our community.**
- Stay home as much as possible. Use home delivery services and online shopping services offered by grocery stores, pharmacies and other essential services. If for some reason you must go out, then wear a face covering and keep a safe distance of at least 6 feet from others. (See Question #5)
- Do not gather with people who live outside your home.
- Don't go to stores or other public spaces for fun or because you are bored.
- People who use or operate ride shares, taxi services or public transportation should make every effort to keep at least six feet away from others to the extent that is possible. Taxi and ride share operators should take steps to properly disinfect hard surfaces in the vehicle in between riders and stops.
- See [New York State on PAUSE](#)
- See <https://dcecodev.com/>

## 10. Can the DCPHS provide me with a “return to work” note?

Delaware County Public Health Services (DCPHS) provides a release from quarantine or isolation for those who have been served order once quarantine or isolation is completed.

## 11. Who is at highest risk for getting very sick from COVID-19?

According to limited research, older adults, people who have chronic medical conditions (e.g. heart disease, diabetes and lung disease), and people who are immunosuppressed are at higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19.

## 12. How do I get tested for COVID-19?

Two kinds of tests are available for COVID-19:

1. **Diagnostic test (swab test)** - Tells you if you have a current infection.
  - For more info see [CDC Testing for COVID-19](#) and [NYSDOH COVID-19 Testing](#)
2. **Serologic antibody test (blood test)** - Tells you if you had a previous infection. **It is very important to remember** that when antibodies to COVID-19 are found in a person, scientists **do not know yet** if there is protection from future infections and how long the protection lasts. COVID-19 is caused by a new virus and many studies are under way to learn more about the disease and how the immune system responds to it.

- For more info see [CDC Testing for COVID-19, https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/04/updated-13102-nysdoh-wadsworth-centers-assay-for-sars-cov-2-igg\\_1.pdf](https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/04/updated-13102-nysdoh-wadsworth-centers-assay-for-sars-cov-2-igg_1.pdf) and [Abbott Laboratories Inc. COVID-19 Antibody Testing Fact Sheet](#)

#### **COVID-19 Diagnostic (Swab) and Antibody Testing is available through:**

- Find A COVID-19 Testing site <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-testing>
- NYSDOH - Call 1-888-364-3065 for testing criteria and to schedule a test.

If you test positive or negative for COVID-19, no matter the type of test, you still should take preventive measures to [protect yourself and others](#).

#### **13. Can I test for COVID-19 at home? What about buying a test online?**

The FDA authorized a diagnostic test for COVID-19 with an at-home sample collection option on April 21, 2020. This test is in limited use and is only available from LabCorp.

Beware of web sites and other outlets that offer at-home COVID-19 test results. These are scams. The best medical advice for you comes from your healthcare provider.

The FDA has a consumer hotline for general information and complaints about fraudulent COVID-19 products at 1-888-INFO-FDA.

#### **14. Is there a vaccine or treatment?**

There is currently no vaccine and no specific treatment for this disease. People infected with COVID-19 can seek medical care to help relieve symptoms. The best medical advice for you comes from your physician.

**FRAUD ALERT:** If you get an email, phone call, offer by mail or other solicitation for COVID-19 tests or treatment, hang up and ignore them.

#### **15. What cleaning products should I use?**

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects (for example: tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks). See [Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Home](#) and it is recommended to use [EPA-registered household disinfectants](#). Follow the instructions on the label (such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use) to ensure safe and effective use of the product.

#### **16. Where do I find information about travel?**

For all travel related questions go to the [CDC COVID-19 Travel website](#).

#### **17. What is a Person Under Investigation (PUI)?**

PUI is a person that has met specific criteria set by the CDC and is being monitored for disease.

### **18. What is the difference between isolation and quarantine?**

First, both Isolation and Quarantine are similar in that they are both imposed to limit the spread of communicable disease. The differences are as follows.

- **Isolation** separates sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick.
- **Quarantine** separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick.
- See Question #11.

### **19: Where can I find information about COVID-19 and Pregnancy?**

See [NYSDOH Pregnancy and COVID-19: Resources for Pregnant People and their Families](#) (03/21/2020)

See [CDC Pregnancy and Breastfeeding](#)

### **20: Where can I find information about COVID-19 and Animals?**

See [CDC Animals and COVID-19](#)

See [FDA COVID-19 & Your Pets](#)

### **21. How can I donate Plasma?**

If you were diagnosed with COVID-19 and are now fully recovered, you may be able to donate plasma. If so, your plasma may be rich in these antibodies and be helpful in the treatment or prevention of COVID-19 disease in others. Donated plasma could be used right now, for compassionate treatment, even before we have scientific trials, or as part of a trial to determine definitively if this treatment works.

<https://www.redcrossblood.org/donate-blood/dlp/plasma-donations-from-recovered-covid-19-patients.html>

### **Additional Information**

Use reliable, fact-based sources when seeking out information about COVID-19 and other public health topics. We recommend the following sites.

- <https://delawarecountypublichealth.com/>
- <http://www.co.delaware.ny.us/wordpress/>

- <https://www.facebook.com/dcpHns/>
- NYSDOH COVID-19 Information Line: 1-888-364-3065
- [NYSDOH COVID-19 Website](#)
- <https://forward.ny.gov/>
- [CDC COVID-19 Website](#)
- [WHO COVID-19 Website](#)
- [US Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\) COVID-19 Website](#)
- [NYSDOH Guidance on How to Protect Yourself and Your Family from COVID-19 When Enjoying the Outdoors](#)