Novel Coronavirus

What is novel coronavirus (COVID-19)?

Novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is a new virus strain that began spreading from person-to-person in China and has now spread to a number of other countries and into the United States, including Ohio. Health experts are concerned because this new virus has the potential to cause severe illness and pneumonia in some people — especially people over age 60 or who have weakened immune systems. Travelers to and from certain areas, including areas inside the U.S., may be at increased risk. **Chinese ancestry—or any other ancestry—does not make a person more vulnerable to this illness.**

How does COVID-19 spread?

Health experts are still learning the details. Currently, it is thought to spread through:

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

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 and can result in death.

What are the symptoms?

People who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 have reported these primary symptoms that may appear in as few as 2 days or as long as 14 days after exposure to the virus:

Fever

Dry Cough

Difficulty breathing

Other symptoms may be present as a result of COVID-19.

When should I seek medical attention?

If you have symptoms like cough, fever, or other respiratory problems, contact your regular doctor or local clinic for advice. If you develop these emergency warning signs for COVID-19, call 911 immediately:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or not being able to wake up easily
- Bluish lips or face

If you're over 60 and you have underlying conditions like diabetes, heart disease, and lung disease, come up with a plan with your doctor to identify your health risks for coronavirus and how to manage symptoms. Contact your doctor right away if you do have symptoms.

How is COVID-19 treated?

There are no medications specifically approved for coronavirus. Most people with mild coronavirus 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.

How can I prevent from getting COVID-19?

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and Dr. Amy Acton, Director of the Ohio Department of Health, have declared a "Stay-at-Home" order for the State of Ohio effective at 11:59 p.m. on March 23, 2020, and will last until 11:59 p.m. on May 1, 2020. There are steps you can take to help prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Stay at home unless it is absolutely necessary that you leave, especially if you are sick
- Frequently wash your hands with soap and water. If hand washing facilities are not available, use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth
- Cover your mouth/nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing
- Avoid being within 6 feet of people who are sick
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects such as door knobs, light switches, tables, countertops, chairs, phones, remotes, keyboards, and touchscreen electronic devices.
- Cloth face coverings are recommended if you must go out in public in order to protect others should you have COVID-19 but not have any symptoms or be otherwise unaware of whether you are infected.

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

For more information: www.clevelandhealth.org

Updated 4/6/2020

Adapted with permission from Public Health – Seattle & King County