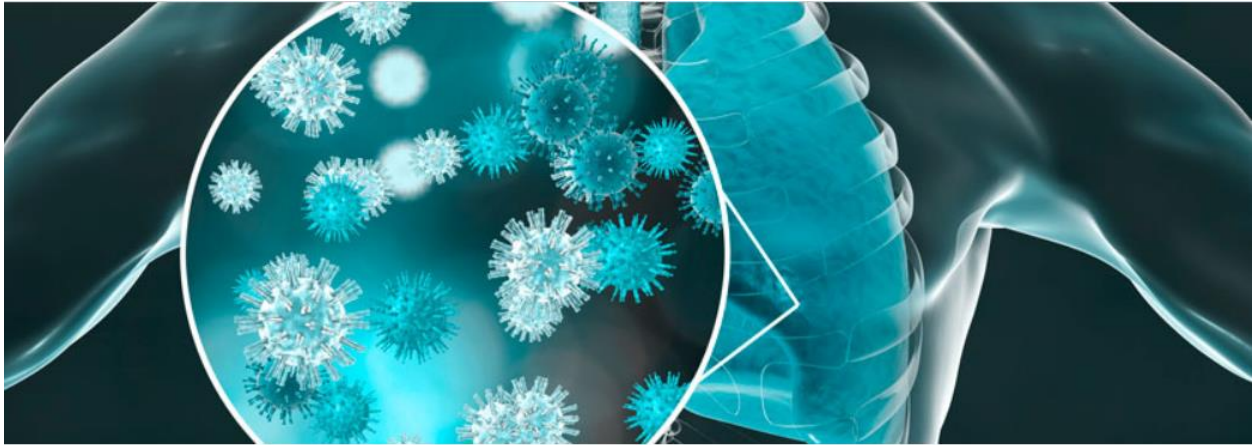


Coronavirus (COVID-19)



For the most up to date information see the [Government of Canada](#).

Frequently asked questions:

What is COVID-19?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that can cause respiratory diseases ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). COVID-19 is a unique strain first identified in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China that has not previously been known to infect humans. Symptoms of COVID-19 illness have ranged from mild cold-like symptoms to severe illness with fever, cough, difficulty breathing and pneumonia.

How is COVID-19 spread?

COVID-19 can spread from person to person, usually after close contact with an infected person (e.g., in a household, workplace or health care setting) through respiratory secretions (e.g., a runny nose or saliva) and droplets present in the air from coughing or sneezing. Transmission is thought to also occur through touching surfaces contaminated with respiratory droplets, then touching your mouth, nose or eyes before washing your hands.

As this is a new disease, much about it is still unknown. While there is evidence of some person-to-person transmission, it is yet to be confirmed how easily the disease spreads from person-to-person; for example, if the spread is limited to only close or prolonged contact with a case.

What should I be doing to protect myself, my family and the community?

To reduce exposure to and transmission of a range of illnesses, including the common cold, influenza and COVID-19, the following health precautions are:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands

- Stay home if you are sick
- When coughing or sneezing:
 - cover your mouth and nose with your arm or tissues to reduce the spread of germs
 - immediately dispose of any tissues you have used into the garbage as soon as possible and wash your hands afterwards
- Avoid visiting people in hospitals or long-term care centres if you are sick
- Clean objects and surfaces that a lot of people touch, such as doorknobs, phones, and television remotes with regular household cleaner
- Stay home when you are sick and avoid contact with other people until your symptoms are gone.
- Do not share personal items that come into contact with saliva such as toothbrushes, eating utensils drinks, water bottles, and towels
- [How to self-monitor](#) (PDF) - Public Health Ontario
- [How to self-isolate](#) (PDF) - English - Public Health Ontario

What should I do to prepare for a possible pandemic situation?

As COVID-19 continues to spread internationally, there are things you can do to prepare in case you or someone in your house becomes ill.

- Stock up on non-perishable foods gradually over the next few weeks.
- Emergency Preparedness encourages residents to be prepared to cope on their own for at least the first 72 hours of an emergency while rescue workers help those in urgent need. Take these three simple steps to prepare for a range of emergencies:
 - [Know the risks](#)
 - [Make a plan](#)
 - [Get an emergency kit](#)
- [Prepare an emergency kit](#). Be prepared for two weeks should you become ill.
- Fill prescriptions and stock up on over-the-counter medications.
- Don't wait to fill essential prescriptions.
- Fill prescriptions for an extra month if you're able.
 - Get refills with enough notice so that you do not run out of medication you may need.
 - Purchase over-the-counter pain/fever medications.
- Make plans for your children or other dependents in case you may be sick.
- Stock up on supplies for your pets.
- Stock up on cleaning supplies.
- Ensure you have adequate sanitary and hygiene supplies.

Should my workplace take special precautions to protect against COVID-19?

Workplaces and other organizations should continue to use regular infection prevention and control practices to prevent the spread of illnesses during the cold and flu season (e.g., frequent handwashing, regular environmental cleaning). No additional safety precautions are required to prevent transmission of COVID-19.

What should I do to prepare as an employer?

Workplaces play an important role in stopping the spread of COVID-19. Infection prevention and control practices help reduce days lost to illness, and protect your employees, customers, and clients. [Employers can take several measures to plan now in the event COVID-19 arrives in their workplace.](#)

- [Interim guidance for Businesses and employers to plan and respond to COVID-19](#) - CDC

Should I wear a face mask to protect myself from getting COVID-19?

There is no need to wear a mask if you are well. Wearing a mask may provide a false sense of security and may actually increase the chance of becoming ill as people continually check their masks and touch their faces without first having cleaned their hands.

The best way to protect yourself from illnesses, including COVID-19 is to:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
- Stay home if you are sick
- When coughing or sneezing:
 - cover your mouth and nose with your arm or tissues to reduce the spread of germs
 - immediately dispose of any tissues you have used into the garbage as soon as possible and wash your hands afterwards
- Avoid visiting people in hospitals or long-term care centres if you are sick
- Clean objects and surfaces that a lot of people touch, such as doorknobs, phones, and television remotes with regular household cleaner
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Are there any travel advisories related to COVID-19?

Visit the Government of Canada [travel health notice](#) page for the latest information.

Where can I find out more about the COVID-19?

- For the most up to date information visit the [Coronavirus Infection: Outbreak Update](#) – Public Health Agency of Canada

Other Resources:

- [Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\): Prevention and risks](#) – Government of Canada
- [Notice: Coronavirus and occupational health and safety](#) – Government of Canada
- [Novel Coronavirus in China](#) – Government of Canada Travel Advisories
- [2019 Novel Coronavirus, Wuhan, China](#) – U.S. Centre for Disease Control and Prevention
- [Coronavirus](#) – World Health Organization
- [Latest travel advice](#) – Government of Canada
- [Declaration of Public Health Emergency of International Concern](#) - World Health Organization
- [Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) – Government of Nova Scotia
- [How to self-monitor](#) (PDF) - Public Health Ontario
- [How to self-isolate](#) (PDF) - English - Public Health Ontario