

## *What is 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)?*

There are many types of human coronaviruses including some that commonly cause mild upper-respiratory tract illnesses. COVID-19 is a new disease, caused by a novel (or new) coronavirus not previously seen in humans. COVID-19 was identified as the cause of an outbreak of respiratory illness first detected in Wuhan, China, that has spread around the world, including the United States and all 50 states.

## *What are the symptoms of COVID-2019?*

People who are infected with COVID-19 have developed mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms including but not limited to fever, cough, shortness of breath, and potentially respiratory distress 2-14 days after exposure.

## *How does COVID-19 spread?*

Coronaviruses are generally spread from person-to-person through respiratory droplets. Someone who is actively sick with COVID-19 can spread the illness to others. That is why the CDC recommends that these patients be isolated from other family members. Currently there is no evidence to support transmission of COVID-19 associated with food. It can 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 possibly their eyes.

## *Who is at higher risk?*

People 65 years and older

**People at any age with:**

Chronic lung disease or asthma

Heart disease

Diabetes

Cancer patients or with weakened immune system

## *How can I help protect myself?*

- **Stay home as much as possible.** Restrict activities outside your home, except for getting medical care. Avoid public transportation and public areas. Avoid crowds. Avoid non-essential travel.
- **Take everyday precautions** to keep space between yourself and others.
- **To the extent possible, avoid touching high-touch surfaces in public places** – elevator buttons, door handles, handrails, handshaking with people, etc. Use a tissue or your sleeve to cover your hand or finger if you must touch something.
- **Wash your hands** after touching surfaces in public places.
- **Avoid touching your face**, nose, eyes, etc.
- **Clean and disinfect** your home to remove germs: practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces (for example: tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks & cell phones).
- **Perform hand hygiene frequently.** Wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- **Make sure that shared spaces at home** have good air flow, such as by air conditioner or an opened window, weather permitting.

### ***What steps should I take if I am sick?***

If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms, such as cough or difficulty breathing, call your healthcare provider for medical advice or call the COVID-19 hotline at Illinois Department of Public Health 1-800-889-3931.

### ***How long do I self-quarantine?***

If you have been diagnosed with COVID-19, you must quarantine yourself for 14 days after symptom onset. If you have been in close contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19, you must quarantine for 14 days since you first had contact with that person. Exposure means, being in close proximity of less than 6 feet, with no mask for more than 15 minutes.

**For more information:** [www.cdc.gov/COVID19](http://www.cdc.gov/COVID19)

### ***What does Quarantine mean?***

Per CDPH, under this Order, quarantine means staying at a single designated home for 14 days (or 7 days as applicable) before doing any activities outside of the home or dwelling. People in quarantine should separate themselves from others as much as possible and check themselves for symptoms of COVID-19. Additional requirements under quarantine include:

- The individual must not be in public or otherwise leave home unless seeking medical care or COVID-19 testing.
- If seeking medical care or testing, or when traveling, a face covering must be worn, and public transportation must not be used.
- Food and other needed supplies must be delivered to the individual's home; the individual may not leave the premises to acquire supplies.
- The traveling individual or family group should be situated in separate quarters with a separate bedroom and, if possible, separate bathroom facility from non-traveling household members.
- The individual must self-monitor for symptoms potentially consistent with COVID-19.

### ***When can I return to work after a confirmed positive, but I didn't have any symptoms of COVID-19?***

Remain off from work for 10 days from the date of their first positive COVID-19 test if you have not become ill since the date of your test.

### ***What do I need to do on return to work?***

Wear a facemask at all times while in the healthcare facility. A facemask is preferred over a home-made face cloth during this time while you are recovering.

### ***Do I need to do any self-monitoring after my illness?***

You will continue to self-monitor for signs and symptoms and seek re-evaluation if your symptoms recur or worsen. **BEFORE** you leave from home to **work** and then in the evening. You are to check for both temperature and signs of COVID-19 (sore throat, body aches, fever >99.5, new cough, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell). You will need to avoid caring for immunocompromised or vulnerable patients until you complete your 14-day monitoring and may have to wear a mask.

### ***What type of monitoring should I be doing?***

Every day before you leave home for work you must assess for symptoms of COVID-19 and take your temperature.

### ***Do I need to be tested if I have mild symptoms?***

The Illinois Department of Public Health feels most illness caused by coronavirus is mild and does **NOT** recommend testing patients with mild illness who can be safely managed at home, unless they have a diagnosis that will impact patient management such as significant health histories. If you have no symptoms, testing is **not** recommended.

### ***Are there any special precautions for Pregnant Health Care workers?***

Information is very limited on how COVID-19 will affect pregnant health care workers. It is recommended to consider limiting exposure of pregnant health care workers to confirmed or suspected COVID-19 patients.