

What you need to know about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

What is coronavirus disease 2019 (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.

Can people in the U.S. get COVID-19?

COVID-19 is spreading from person to person in China, and limited spread among close contacts has been detected in some countries outside China, including the United States. At this time, however, this virus is NOT currently spreading in communities in the United States. Right now, the greatest risk of infection is for people in China or people who have traveled to China. Risk of infection is dependent on exposure. Close contacts of people who are infected are at greater risk of exposure, for example health care workers and close contacts of people who are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19. CDC continues to closely monitor the situation.

Have there been cases of COVID-19 in the U.S.?

Yes. The first case of COVID-19 in the United States was reported on January 21, 2020. The current count of cases of COVID-19 in the United States is available on CDC's webpage at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html>.

How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 probably emerged from an animal source, but now it seems to be spreading from person to person. It's important to note that person-to-person spread can happen on a continuum. Some diseases are highly contagious (like measles), while other diseases are less so. At this time, it's unclear how easily or sustainably the virus that causes COVID-19 is spreading between people. Learn what is known about the spread of newly emerged coronaviruses at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html>.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of

- fever
- cough
- shortness of breath



What are severe complications from this virus?

Many patients have pneumonia in both lungs.

How can I help protect myself?

The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

There are simple everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses. These include

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

If you are sick, to keep from spreading respiratory illness to others, you should

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

What should I do if I recently traveled to China and got sick?

If you were in China within the past 14 days and feel sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, you should seek medical care. Call the office of your health care provider before you go, and tell them about your travel and your symptoms. They will give you instructions on how to get care without exposing other people to your illness. While sick, avoid contact with people, don't go out and delay any travel to reduce the possibility of spreading illness to others.

Is there a vaccine?

There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

Is there a treatment?

There is no specific antiviral treatment for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 can seek medical care to help relieve symptoms.

Patients with COVID-19 have experienced mild to severe respiratory illness.

Symptoms* can include

FEVER



COUGH



*Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure.

If you have been in China or in close contact with someone with confirmed COVID-19 in the past 2 weeks and develop symptoms, call your doctor.

SHORTNESS OF BREATH



If you are sick with COVID-19 or suspect you are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, follow the steps below to help prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home and community.

Stay home except to get medical care

You should restrict activities outside your home, except for getting medical care. Do not go to work, school, or public areas. Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.

Separate yourself from other people and animals in your home

People: As much as possible, you should stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. Also, you should use a separate bathroom, if available.

Animals: Do not handle pets or other animals while sick. See [COVID-19 and Animals](#) for more information.

Call ahead before visiting your doctor

If you have a medical appointment, call the healthcare provider and tell them that you have or may have COVID-19. This will help the healthcare provider's office take steps to keep other people from getting infected or exposed.

Wear a facemask

You should wear a facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) or pets and before you enter a healthcare provider's office. If you are not able to wear a facemask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then people who live with you should not stay in the same room with you, or they should wear a facemask if they enter your room.

Cover your coughs and sneezes

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw used tissues in a lined trash can; immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 to 95% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty.

Avoid sharing personal household items

You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets in your home. After using these items, they should be washed thoroughly with soap and water.

Clean your hands often

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Clean all "high-touch" surfaces every day

High touch surfaces include counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables. Also, clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them. Use a household cleaning spray or wipe, according to the label instructions. Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaning product including precautions you should take when applying the product, such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.

Monitor your symptoms

Seek prompt medical attention if your illness is worsening (e.g., difficulty breathing). **Before** seeking care, call your healthcare provider and tell them that you have, or are being evaluated for, COVID-19. Put on a facemask before you enter the facility. These steps will help the healthcare provider's office to keep other people in the office or waiting room from getting infected or exposed.

Ask your healthcare provider to call the local or state health department. Persons who are placed under active monitoring or facilitated self-monitoring should follow instructions provided by their local health department or occupational health professionals, as appropriate.

If you have a medical emergency and need to call 911, notify the dispatch personnel that you have, or are being evaluated for COVID-19. If possible, put on a facemask before emergency medical services arrive.

Discontinuing home isolation

Patients with confirmed COVID-19 should remain under home isolation precautions until the risk of secondary transmission to others is thought to be low. The decision to discontinue home isolation precautions should be made on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with healthcare providers and state and local health departments.



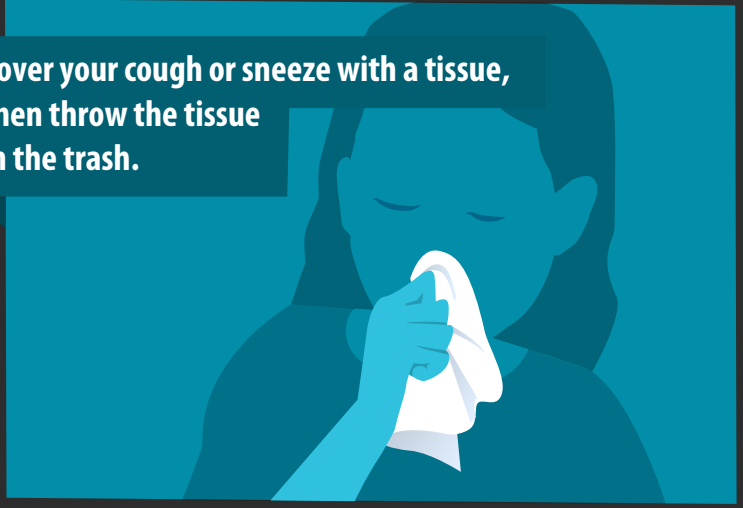
STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

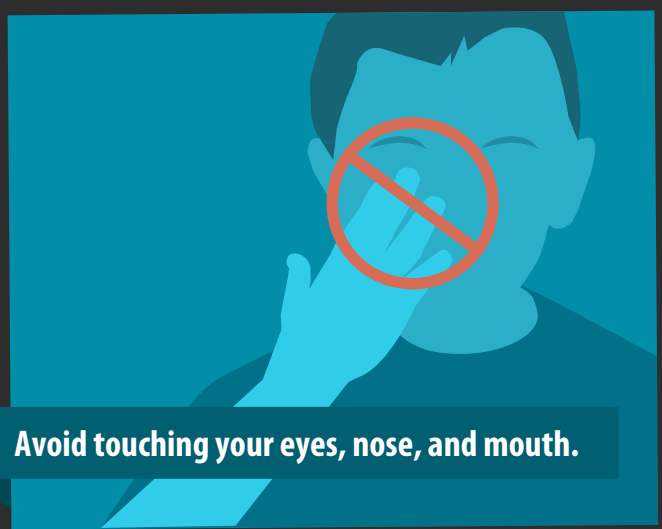
Avoid close contact with people who are sick.



Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.



Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.



Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.



Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.



Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.



For more information: www.cdc.gov/COVID19

Mandatory Stand-Up Talk

Feb. 29, 2020

Staying vigilant

Flu Response and Prevention

As you may be aware several cases of the Coronavirus have arisen in our area. One of our Seattle NDC employees has tested positive for the COVID-19, also known as the Coronavirus. This employee has self-quarantined and will not return to our facility until cleared by health authorities. In consultation with the Seattle Public Health Department, we have been informed the current risk to our employees is low and that the building in which the individual worked is safe for employees.

The safety and well-being of our employees is one of our highest priorities. To ensure the health of our employees, we are continuing to follow recommended strategies from the CDC and Seattle Public Health Department. These include:

- Increased cleaning of frequently touched surfaces in the workplace (consoles, doorknobs, countertops, workstations, etc.)
- Encouraging sick employees to stay home and consult their health care provider
- Use of contract cleaner to enhance and supplement current cleaning protocols
- Making available Clorox wipes for your use throughout the facility. Feel free to use these to sanitize your work station.
- Making N-95 Respirators and Nitrile gloves available on a voluntary basis for any employee who request them. *(Note: OSHA Appendix D will be provided to employees)*
- Ensuring all restrooms are well equipped with towels, soap, and hand sanitizer at all times.

We are posting additional information on all of the bulletin boards in the facility. These additional postings, created by the CDC, discuss how to respond if you experience symptoms and more information about the Coronavirus.

It's important to remember that the best defense against sickness is good personal hygiene. Practice good respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene. Wash your hands regularly for at least 20 seconds at a time and cover your mouth when sneezing or coughing.

Voluntary Use of Filtering Facepiece (FFP) Respirators

What is an FFP?

An FFP, also called a dust mask, is a negative-pressure, particulate respirator in which:

1. The filter is an integral part of the facepiece; or
2. The entire facepiece is composed of the filtering medium.

What is Voluntary Use?

The phrase voluntary use of a filtering facepiece (FFP) refers to situations in which:

1. An employee requests an FFP or provides his or her own FFP; and
2. The employee is not required by OSHA to use an FFP for protection from hazardous air contaminants.

Although FFPs are respirators, OSHA places no medical limitations on their use. – Check this.

What Is Permitted?

Employees may voluntarily use FFPs in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. Any Postal Service employee may voluntarily wear an FFP as long as the FFP itself does not cause a hazardous condition and no hazardous air contaminants are present.
2. FFPs do not necessarily protect against exposure to toxic materials. If an employee needs protection against such exposure, the Postal Service must supply an appropriate respirator in accordance with 29 CFR 1910.134.
3. Local management will provide an FFP upon request or an employee may use his or her own FFP.
4. Prior to voluntarily wearing an FFP, whether it is provided by the Postal Service or by the employee, any employee requesting wear of an FFP must be given the following required information:
 - a. The safety talk provided at Attachment 1 and
 - b. 29 CFR 1910.134 Appendix D, Mandatory Information for Employees Using Respirators When Not Required Under the Standard. (See attachment 2).
5. Document that this required information was provided to employees using FFP. Use a simple, locally-developed spreadsheet or hard copy training record.
6. FFPs supplied by the Postal Service for voluntary use must be approved by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).
7. FFPs worn voluntarily by employees are not subject to the medical evaluation, cleaning, storage, and maintenance provisions of the written RP program.
8. An improved FFP fit may be obtained following the instructions at Attachment 3.
9. FFPs used voluntarily may not be worn if they are soiled, unclean, or contaminated, or if they interfere with the employee's ability to work safely.

What Is Not Permitted?

1. Employees may not voluntarily use tight-fitting, air-purifying respirators or supplied air respirators (devices that provide clean breathing air from uncontaminated sources).
2. The most commonly used tight-fitting respirators (half-face or full-face) include elastomeric respirators, which are normally made of a rubberlike material in which an appropriate filter (i.e., canister) can be attached. Voluntary use of tight-fitting, air-purifying respirators and lesser-used supplied air respirators is prohibited.

Questions, Who to Call?

1. Contact your Facility Safety Coordinator.
2. Contact your supporting District Safety Office.
3. MI EL-810-2009-4, Personal Protective Equipment and Respiratory Protection Programs.

Attachment 1

Safety Talk - Safe Use of Filtering Facepieces (Dust Masks)

The following information must be shared with all employees who voluntarily wear a filtering facepiece (dust mask) on the job:

1. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires that you be given the information provided in Attachment 2 if you wear a filtering facepiece (FFP), also known as a dust mask, while working.
2. This information applies whether the Postal Service offers you an FFP or you choose to wear your own.
3. Postal Service employees may wear an FFP while working unless it would cause a hazardous condition (see OSHA Appendix D).
4. Employees are not permitted to wear tight-fitting, air-purifying respirators or other non-FFP respirators unless they are supplied by the Postal Service in conformance with OSHA regulations. This policy is for your protection.
5. The information OSHA requires the Postal Service to share with you deals mostly with tight-fitting respirators (such as the rubber-mask-type with canisters attached). However, some of this information is also pertinent to FFPs. Note the following points when wearing an FFP, whether it is your own or it is offered for your comfort by the Postal Service:
 - a. Read and follow the instructions for a more comfortable fit and effectiveness. Follow recommendations for fit testing and use, storage, and cleaning, because a dirty FFP can cause skin irritation or other health problems.
 - b. FFPs may be suitable to provide comfort and to avoid allergens (like pollen) and nuisance dust. However, they do not necessarily protect you from toxic materials. If necessary, the Postal Service will supply you with a carefully selected respirator for that purpose in conformance with OSHA regulations.
 - c. Do not wear an FFP if it causes breathing problems or other discomfort. Consult with safety or medical personnel.

Attachment 2

Appendix D to 29 CFR 1910.134

**Mandatory Information for Employees Using Respirators When Not Required Under the Standard*

“Respirators are an effective method of protection against designated hazards when properly selected and worn. Respirator use is encouraged, even when exposures are below the exposure limit, to provide an additional level of comfort and protection for workers. However, if a respirator is used improperly or not kept clean, the respirator itself can become a hazard to the worker. Sometimes, workers may wear respirators to avoid exposures to hazards, even if the amount of hazardous substance does not exceed the limits set by OSHA standards. If your employer provides respirators for your voluntary use, or if you provide your own respirator, you need to take certain precautions to be sure that the respirator itself does not present a hazard.

“You should do the following:

1. Read and heed all instructions provided by the manufacturer on use, maintenance, cleaning and care, and warnings regarding the respirator’s limitations.
2. Choose respirators certified for use to protect against the contaminant of concern. NIOSH, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, certifies respirators. A label or statement of certification should appear on the respirator or respirator packaging. It will tell you what the respirator is designed for and how much it will protect you.
3. Do not wear your respirator into atmospheres containing contaminants for which your respirator is not designed to protect against. For example, a respirator designed to filter dust particles will not protect you against gases, vapors, or very small solid particles of fumes or smoke.
4. Keep track of your respirator so that you do not mistakenly use someone else’s respirator.”

Attachment 3

Voluntary N-95 Filtering Facepiece - User Donning Instructions & Seal Checks.

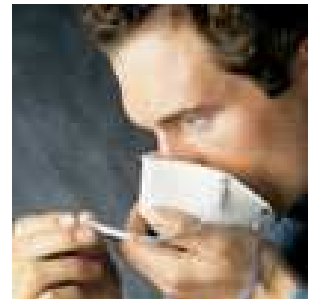
Please follow these instructions each time the N-95 is used:

- It is important to obtain a proper fit.
- User should be clean-shaven. Any facial hair, such as beards or long sideburns, may prevent the respirator from fitting properly.
- Eyewear should not interfere with face to facepiece seal.
- These instructions are generic. Also consult the respirator manufacturer's recommended procedures for performing a user seal check.

1. Hold respirator in hand with molded nose contour (narrow end) at finger tips, allowing headstraps to fall below hand.



2. Place respirator under chin with molded nose contour (narrow end) up. Nose cushion must be un-creased inside respirator. Raise top strap to top back of head. Pull shorter bottom strap over head, below ears, to around neck. **Do not wear with only one strap.**



3. Adjust respirator for comfortable fit.



4. Each time user dons a mask, the seal should be fit checked. Cover front of respirator by cupping both hands. INHALE SHARPLY. A negative pressure should be felt inside respirator. Next EXHALE, **If any leakage is detected at respirator edges, adjust straps by pulling back along the sides and/or reposition respirator.** Repeat until sealed properly, otherwise see your supervisor.

