

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q1. What is Novel Coronavirus? Is it new?**

Human coronaviruses are quite common, usually similar to the common cold, and can spread easily between people.

On December 31, 2019, health authorities in China identified a new (or novel) coronavirus (referred to as 2019-nCoV), after several cases of pneumonia in Wuhan, China. On February 11th, 2020, the World Health Organization named the new illness COVID-19, where COVI stands for coronavirus, D stands for disease and 19 represents 2019, the year it was first identified.

### **Q2. What are the symptoms of the virus?**

Symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing

If you experience severe symptoms such as chest pains or shortness of breath, call 9-1-1 or visit the nearest Emergency Department.

The risk of developing severe disease from the 2019 novel coronavirus may be higher for older people or anyone with chronic disease such as diabetes, cancer, heart, renal or chronic lung disease.

### **Q3. How does the virus spread?**

COVID-19 can spread by direct contact or when the droplets from a cough or a sneeze from an infected person are breathed in by anyone who is close to the infected person.

**Q4. Will this year's flu vaccine protect me from COVID-19?**

No, the flu vaccine does not protect against COVID 19. There is no vaccine that protects against coronaviruses at this time, but research continues.

**Q5. How soon would COVID-19 symptoms start?**

Symptoms may appear in as few as two days, or as long as 14 days, after being exposed to someone with COVID-19.

\*This time period may be updated as new information becomes available.

**Q6. How is COVID-19 diagnosed?**

The infections are diagnosed by a specific laboratory test. Testing is being conducted at both the Public Health Ontario Laboratory in Toronto and the National Microbiology Laboratory in Winnipeg. Only those patients who meet the specific [case definition](#) for COVID-19 are being tested. A special request for testing cannot be made.

**Q7. How can I protect myself from getting COVID-19?**

You can stay healthy and prevent the spread of infections by:

- [washing your hands](#) often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds;
- avoiding touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands;
- avoiding close contact with people who are sick;
- [cover your cough](#) (coughing or sneezing into your sleeve and not your hands)
- staying home if you are sick to avoid spreading illness to others.

**Q8. Should I wear a mask to protect myself against COVID-19?**

No. You do not need to wear a mask unless you think you are already infected. There is no evidence that masks protect people who aren't already ill. Face masks are only recommended for people who are sick with the virus or believe they may be infected and for people who live with or care for them.

**Q9. Are Canadians at risk for contracting COVID-19 if they receive a package or products shipped from China?**

There is no known risk of coronaviruses entering Canada on parcels or packages coming from affected regions, and no cases of COVID-10 in Canada have been associated with imported goods.

**Q10. Is there treatment for the virus?**

Currently, there is no treatment for COVID-19, but research continues. If you experience severe symptoms such as chest pains or shortness of breath, call 9-1-1 or visit your nearest Emergency Department to access supportive care.

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