

Helpful Information about COVID-19

Symptoms

COVID-19 is a new respiratory disease, caused by a novel (or new) coronavirus that has not previously been seen in humans. Reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death for confirmed COVID-19 cases.

Symptoms of this infection may appear 2-14 days after exposure and include:

- Fever, chills or shaking chills
- Signs of a lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough, shortness of breath, lowered oxygen saturation)
- Fatigue, sore throat, headache, body aches/myalgia, or new loss of sense of taste or smell
- Other less common symptoms can include gastrointestinal symptoms (e.g. nausea, vomiting, diarrhea), rash, and inflammatory conditions such as “COVID toes”.
- In elderly, chronically ill, or debilitated individuals such as residents of a long-term care facility, symptoms of COVID-19 may be subtle such as alterations in mental status or in blood glucose control

However, it's possible for people with COVID-19 to spread the virus to others up to 48 hours before they have symptoms. Visit the [CDC's resource on symptoms](#) for more information.

If you develop symptoms of COVID-19, even if they are mild, please contact your healthcare provider and a test site near you to schedule a test. You can also [check your symptoms online](#).

You can also call 2-1-1 to learn more about:

- COVID-19 prevention, symptoms, and treatment
- Information about testing
- Guidance for people planning or returning from travel

Source and spread

COVID-19 is [spreading from person-to-person](#). There is widespread community level transmission in Massachusetts and travel history is no longer a significant risk factor. For more information on travel, see the [CDC-issued Travel Health Notices](#).

About coronaviruses

Coronaviruses are a large group of viruses; some cause illness in people and some occur in animals, including camels, civet cats and bats. Rarely, animal coronaviruses can evolve and infect people and then may spread between people. Human coronaviruses cause routine seasonal respiratory virus infections. Other coronaviruses, like SARS and MERS, can cause serious illnesses.

How do coronaviruses spread?

Coronaviruses are respiratory viruses and are generally spread through respiratory secretions (droplets from coughs and sneezes) of an infected person to another person.

For more information, please visit [frequently asked questions about COVID-19](#).

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/about-covid-19>

