



# Coronavirus: What You Need to Know

## Overview

A novel (new) coronavirus is causing an outbreak of respiratory illness that originated near the city of Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. This outbreak began in early December 2019 and continues to expand in scope and magnitude. Chinese health officials have reported thousands of cases in the city of Wuhan and severe illness has been reported, including deaths. Cases have also been identified in travelers from Wuhan to other parts of China and the world, including the United States. Person-to-person transmittal is occurring though it's unclear how easily this virus is spreading between people at this time. Signs and symptoms of this illness include fever, cough, and difficulty breathing.

## How many people have been affected?

As of March 2, the outbreak has affected an estimated 87,000 people globally. The coronavirus has spread to at least 30 other countries. The most badly affected include Japan, with 850 cases. Italy has recorded at least 1,100 cases and 29 deaths, while South Korea has recorded more than 4,212 cases and 22 deaths. There have also been deaths in Hong Kong, Taiwan, France, the US, and the Philippines.

## What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, tiredness, and dry cough. Some patients may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat or diarrhea. These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually. Some people become infected but don't develop any symptoms and don't feel unwell. Most people (about 80%) recover from the disease without needing special treatment. Around 1 out of 6 people who get COVID-19 becomes seriously ill and develops difficulty breathing. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes, are more likely to develop serious illness. People with fever, cough, and difficulty breathing should seek medical attention.

## What steps should I be taking to protect myself?

There are everyday preventive measures to reduce the spread of germs and help reduce the risk of transmission of respiratory infections such as this Coronavirus. The following are basic infection prevention measures:

- Avoiding close contact with people suffering from respiratory infections;
- Washing your hands frequently, especially after direct contact with ill people or their belongings and environment;
- Alcohol hand sanitizers are also effective;
- Try not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands;
- Stay home when you are sick (and keep sick children home from school);
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue or your elbow. If you use a tissue, wash your hands afterwards;
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces;
- People with symptoms of respiratory infection should stay home and practice cough etiquette (maintain distance, cover coughs and sneezes with disposable tissues or cough/sneeze into elbow, and wash hands); and
- Avoiding unnecessary travel to the affected areas, if possible.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

CDC webpage on the novel coronavirus:

[www.cdc.gov/wuhan](http://www.cdc.gov/wuhan)

World Health Organization

[www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public](http://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public)