

FAQs

Q: What is coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)?

A: COVID-19, or coronavirus disease 2019, is respiratory disease caused by one of the seven coronaviruses known to infect humans. It was first identified in humans in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, in December 2019. The virus that causes COVID-19 is called SARS-CoV-2.

Q: Why am I at risk?

A: There is community spread across Ohio and the United States, meaning you can pick up the virus that causes COVID-19 from people you know or from out in your community from unknown sources, much like you catch the flu.

Q: What are the symptoms?

A: Symptoms, which generally appear two to 14 days after exposure, include fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea. Symptoms range from mild to severe; however, some people with COVID-19 have no symptoms. Older adults, people with chronic health conditions, and people with compromised immune systems are more likely to become more severely ill. The CDC will update its list of [possible symptoms](#) as more is learned about COVID-19.

Q: How does it spread?

A: COVID-19 is believed to spread mainly from person-to-person between people who are in close contact (within about 6 feet) with one another and through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It also may 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 eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

Q: What can I do to prevent it?

A: There are no vaccines to prevent COVID-19. It is still recommended that you stay home as much as possible. Work from home if you can. When going out, try to maintain a 6-foot distance from others as much as possible, wear a face covering and follow the [recommended guidelines](#) for the type of business or venue you are visiting. Use the personal prevention protection methods shown in the graphic below. Clean high-touch areas — counters, tables, doorknobs, light switches, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones,

keyboards, tablets, nightstands — often, using household cleaning spray or wipes according to label directions. A list of disinfectants registered with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 can be accessed [here](#).

Q: Should I wear a mask?

A: It is strongly recommended that Ohioans wear cloth face coverings to cover their nose and mouth when at work or out in the community. A cloth face covering may prevent the spread of virus from the wearer to others, which is especially important if someone is infected but does not have symptoms. Masks do not replace the need for social distancing, frequent hand cleaning and other everyday preventive actions. They should **never be used** on children younger than 2, anyone with breathing problems, or anyone who cannot easily remove them in their own. Do not use medical masks, which must be reserved for healthcare workers and other first responders.

Q: Why did the Ohio governor and health director order residents to stay home, prohibit gatherings of 10 or more, and close schools and many businesses and other services?

A: Preventing the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 and preventing deaths required limiting exposure to as few people as possible. People who have COVID-19, sometimes without showing any symptoms, can pass the disease on to two or three other people without knowing it. If COVID-19 cases had spiked, healthcare providers could become overwhelmed and run out of supplies to protect themselves and treat patients — not just COVID-19 patients, but also others. Ohioans' vigilance in following the orders has allowed for the reopening of many businesses and other venues.

Q: Why have restrictions been lifted?

A: Restrictions have been lifted to stem the damage that COVID-19 precautions have had on Ohio's economy. This is possible because Ohioans adhered to stay-at-home and took other precautionary measures to flatten the curve and prevent a healthcare crisis. Advisory groups in various industry sectors are creating and committing to policies and practices intended to keep the virus from spreading further. For additional details visit the [Responsible Restart](#) page at coronavirus.ohio.gov.

Q: What else is being done to keep Ohioans safe?

A: Ohio is reopening businesses in phases and will monitor COVID-19 data before taking subsequent steps. Testing for COVID-19 is being expanded and [contact tracing](#) is being conducted to monitor people who may have been exposed to COVID-19 patients. Open businesses and workplaces are required to follow several protocols to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Further, efforts will continue to build Ohio's supply of protective equipment for healthcare workers. More information on these efforts can be found on the [Responsible Restart](#) page at coronavirus.ohio.gov.

Q: What remains closed?

A: Schools; older adult daycare services and senior centers; adult day support or vocational rehabilitation

services in group settings; rooming and boarding houses and workers' camps; and certain entertainment/recreation venues. A more detailed list can be found [here](#).

Q: What if I have to go to work?

A: Whenever possible stay at least 6 feet from other people. Wear a face covering, wash your hands often, try not to touch your face, and frequently disinfect your work area with disinfecting cleanser. Don't share equipment used near the face and don't congregate in breakrooms or other areas. Additional tips to prevent infection are found in the graphic below.

Q: What should I do if I think I have COVID-19?

A: Call a healthcare professional if you develop symptoms listed above. Older people, people with underlying medical conditions, and people with compromised immune symptoms should contact a healthcare provider early. If you experience severe symptoms (e.g., persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion or inability to arouse, bluish lips or face, or other concerning symptoms), contact a healthcare provider or emergency department and seek care immediately.

Q: Should I visit my doctor for concerns not related to COVID-19?

A: You should make all medically necessary visits as recommended by your healthcare provider. Ask for teleservices if available. Restrictions on elective and non-essential surgeries and procedures have been lifted. Providers are required to meet several criteria, including infection control and other environmental practices. They also must maintain adequate amounts of personal protection equipment for healthcare workers, and other supplies, equipment, and medicine needed for each patient and all phases of care.

Q: Should I get tested?

A: Testing supplies are being expanded across the state; however, testing remains largely limited to Ohioans who are the sickest and the most at risk of developing severe symptoms, Ohioans in nursing homes and other congregate settings, professionals who provide care for the ill, and Ohioans who are undergoing surgeries or other procedures. This will allow providers to immediately and aggressively act to treat at-risk patients and to take safety precautions to prevent spread of the disease. Your healthcare provider can advise whether you should be tested.

Q: Is it safe to donate blood?

A: Continue to donate blood if you are well and able. Blood centers have been by provided recommendations that will keep donors and staff safe, such as spacing donor chairs 6 feet apart, thoroughly adhering to environmental cleaning practices, and encouraging donors to make donation appointments ahead of time.

Q: Is food safe? Can I get COVID-19 from a person who handles my food?

A: Currently there is no evidence of food or food packaging being associated with transmission of

COVID-19. However, the virus that causes COVID-19 can spread from person-to-person. Food workers who are sick should stay home until they no longer pose a risk of infecting others. Anyone handling, preparing, or serving food should always follow safe food handling procedures, such as washing hands and surfaces often. It is also critical to follow the [four key steps of food safety](#) — clean, separate, cook, and chill — to prevent foodborne illness.

Q: What should I do if I experience price gouging or scams?

A: Scammers are trying to monopolize on the fear and uncertainty that COVID-19 has brought to so many. Watch out for claims of products or medications that can prevent or treat COVID-19 or anyone asking for your personal or banking information. If you suspect any unfair or deceptive sales practices, contact the office of Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost at www.OhioProtects.org or 1-800-282-0515. See more on this issue [here](#).

Q: Can I get COVID-19 from my pet? If I'm sick, can I make my pet sick?

A: At this time, there is no reason to believe that animals, including pets, in the U.S. might be a source of COVID-19. To date, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has not received any reports of pets or other animals becoming sick with COVID-19 in the U.S.

For additional information, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov.

For answers to your COVID-19 questions, call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634).

Your mental health is just as important as your physical health. If you or a loved one are experiencing anxiety related to the coronavirus pandemic, help is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call the COVID-19 CareLine at 1-800-720-9616.

*Document updated **June 2, 2020**, with information from ODH, CDC, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Additional FAQs can be found at the CDC website [here](#) and the FDA website [here](#).*

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019



Department of Health

Protect yourself and others from COVID-19 by taking these precautions.

PREVENTION

For additional information call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH or visit coronavirus.ohio.gov.



STAY HOME EXCEPT FOR WORK AND OTHER NEEDS



WEAR A FACE COVERING WHEN GOING OUT



PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING OF AT LEAST 6 FEET FROM OTHERS



SHOP AT NON-PEAK HOURS



WASH HANDS OFTEN WITH WATER AND SOAP (20 SECONDS OR LONGER)



AVOID TOUCHING YOUR EYES, NOSE, OR MOUTH WITH UNWASHED HANDS OR AFTER TOUCHING SURFACES



COVER YOUR MOUTH WITH A TISSUE OR SLEEVE WHEN COUGHING OR SNEEZING



CLEAN AND DISINFECT "HIGH-TOUCH" SURFACES OFTEN



DON'T WORK WHEN SICK



CALL BEFORE VISITING YOUR DOCTOR

For more information, visit: coronavirus.ohio.gov