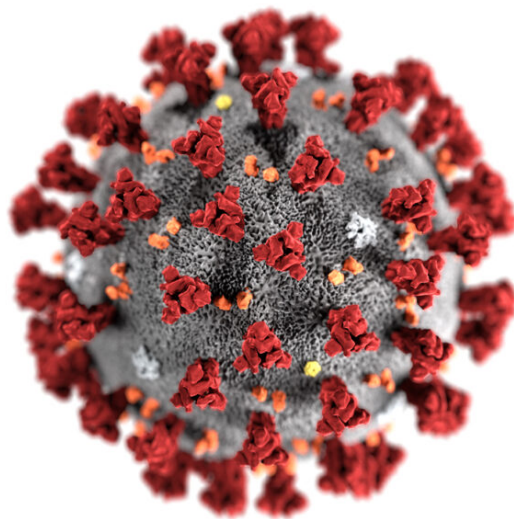


The Coronavirus: what you need to know

Coronavirus outbreak: Signs, symptoms and preventive measures

In January 2020 the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak of a new coronavirus disease in Hubei Province, China to be a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. WHO stated there is a high risk of the 2019 coronavirus disease (COVID-19) spreading to other countries around the world.



- Corona is a large group of viruses, which can infect both humans and animals with cold related diseases. The intensity of the infection ranges from the common cold to acute respiratory syndrome.
- It initially occurred in a group of people with pneumonia who had been associated with a seafood and live animal market in Wuhan, China. The disease has since spread from those infected to family members, healthcare workers; and now to others outside of China.

How COVID-19 spreads

When someone who has COVID-19 coughs or exhales they release droplets of infected fluid. Most of these droplets fall on nearby surfaces and objects - such as desks, tables or telephones. People could catch COVID-19 by touching contaminated surfaces or objects – and then touching their eyes, nose or mouth. If they are standing **within two meters** of a person with COVID-19 they can catch it by breathing in droplets coughed out or exhaled by them. In other words, COVID-19 spreads in a similar way to flu.

Most persons infected with COVID-19 experience mild symptoms and recover. However, some go on to experience more serious illness and may require hospital care. Risk of serious illness rises with age: people over 40 seem to be more vulnerable than those under 40. People with weakened immune systems and people with conditions such as diabetes, heart and lung disease are also more vulnerable to serious illness.



CLEAN HANDS

Frequently clean hands by using alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.



COVER YOUR MOUTH

When coughing and sneezing cover mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue.



AVOID THE SICK

Avoid close contact with anyone that has fever and a cough.



AVOID ANIMALS

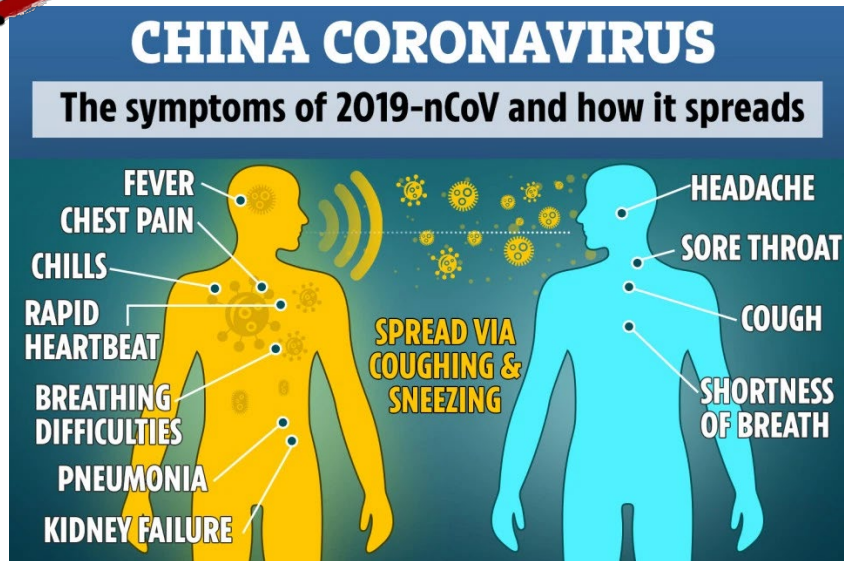
Avoid unprotected contact with live or farm animals and thoroughly cook meat and eggs.

Source: World Health Organisation (WHO)

The Coronavirus: signs, symptoms and preventative measures...



Symptoms



MOST AT RISK

Those dealing with the trade of live animals and health care workers. Those over 40 and people with a weakened immune system.

TREATMENT

There is no vaccine as yet. Supportive medical care is provided to help relieve the acuteness of the symptoms.

POINTS TO NOTE

The best way to prepare in a pandemic, is not to panic. Do not get caught up in rumours on social media – not everything you hear about COVID-19 is true. Rather stay informed through the use of a trusted source.

STAY INFORMED

Read local news sources
Follow the WHO website
Speak to your HR representative



Link: World Health Organisation ([WHO](https://www.who.int))

Myth busters

- **Can a UV light be used to kill the virus?** No, these lights should not be used to sterilize hands. UV radiation can also cause skin irritation.
- **Can hand dryers kill the virus?** No, only using an alcohol-based hand rub or wash your hands with soap and water.
- **Can pets at home spread the virus?** At present, there is no evidence that companion pets can be infected. It is however best to wash your hands after handling your pet due to the potential presence of bacteria i.e. e-coli.
- **Can rinsing your nose with saline help prevent infection?** No, there is no evidence that saline or rinsing your nose can protect you from infection.
- **Will wearing a mask protect me?** Most medical masks cannot protect you against the virus when used alone. The use of a mask is specifically suggested for those who already have a cough or experience difficulty breathing.

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