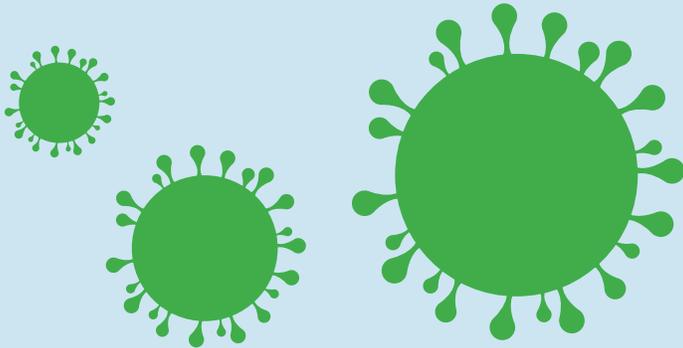


# Four Things You Need to Know

# CORONAVIRUS

## What is it?

The 2019 novel coronavirus infection, also known as **COVID-19**, is a respiratory infection caused by a new virus that was first identified in late 2019. It is actively being studied to determine how it is transmitted.



**Coronaviruses are common.** In fact, many ordinary colds are caused by coronaviruses.

**For most people, the immediate risk of being exposed to the virus is considered low at this time.**

## How do I know if I have it?

People considered at elevated risk are those who 1) live or have traveled in areas where the disease has spread in the community, 2) are health care providers caring for individuals with COVID-19, or 3) have had close contact with someone with confirmed COVID-19.

**Older adults** and **people with serious chronic illnesses** like diabetes, heart disease or lung disease are at higher risk of getting very sick from COVID-19 and should take extra precautions. This includes having a supply of necessary medications on hand and stocking up on any household supplies or groceries needed for a prolonged period at home.



**Common symptoms can include fever, cough and shortness of breath.** If you have symptoms and are at high risk, you should call your health care provider. Tell them about your symptoms and recent travel before visiting their office. This allows for infection prevention and control measures to be in place before your arrival.

## How do I protect myself?

While there is currently no vaccine, the best way to protect yourself from COVID-19 is similar to how you'd take precautions against the cold or flu.



**Avoid close contact with people who are sick**



**Cover your cough or sneeze**



**Wash your hands using soap and water for at least 20 seconds**

Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces such as doorknobs, light switches or cabinet handles.

Stay home if you are sick.

Older adults and people with serious chronic illnesses should avoid all non-essential travel.

There is no need to wear a face mask if you are well and do not have any symptoms.

## What are experts doing?

Infectious diseases physicians, scientists and public health experts affiliated with the Infectious Diseases Society of America, the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization are working in several areas related to COVID-19, including:

- **Providing guidance** to hospitals and health care providers;
- **Working closely with local, state, national and global partners** to provide accurate information and clinical guidance;
- **Providing resources and expertise** to contain the outbreak;
- **Researching diagnostic tests** that may be able to better detect the disease;
- **Studying the spread of COVID-19** to better understand how to protect the public.

**IDSA provides up-to-date information** on its resource page: [COVID-19: What You Need to Know](#)