

2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

WHAT IS A CORONAVIRUS?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness (like common cold or flu) that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel (new) coronavirus that was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China in late December 2019.

HOW DOES COVID-19 SPREAD?

The virus spreads by:

- Air through coughing and sneezing (droplets) - most common mode of transmission
- Close personal contact, such as touching, shaking hands, touching your mouth, nose, or eyes
- Touching an object or surface with the virus on it

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19?

- Patients with COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild flu-like illness to severe respiratory disease – most common symptoms include:
 - fever
 - cough
 - shortness of breath

HOW CAN I HELP PROTECT MYSELF AND OTHERS?

- **THE MOST EFFECTIVE METHOD OF PREVENTION IS HAND WASHING** - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially if hands are visibly dirty. If soap and water are not available, **use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.**
- **THE BEST THING TO DO IF YOU ARE SICK IS COVER YOUR COUGH OR SNEEZE** with a disposable tissue or the fold of the arm.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- **STAY HOME WHEN YOU ARE SICK AND CONTACT YOUR MEDICAL PROVIDER FOR FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS.**
- Avoid close contact with persons who are sick and maintain your personal space of at least 6 feet from persons with symptoms such as cough, sneezing, fever, etc.
- **CDC RECOMMENDS USING A FACEMASK ONLY IF YOU BELIEVE YOU ARE SICK.**

Note: For persons over 60 years of age and/or with chronic illnesses; eat well, exercise and maintain your scheduled doctor appointments.

IS THERE A VACCINE OR TREATMENT?

There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19, though vaccine development is projected to be accomplished within the next 12 months. There is no specific antiviral treatment for COVID-19. People are treated for symptoms to reduce fever, body aches, and to provide breathing support. Please seek medical care should symptoms worsen.

Although the flu vaccine will not protect you from COVID-19, it will help to prevent the flu, which has similar symptoms as COVID-19. More than 14,000 people have already died from the flu this season alone. **GET YOUR FLU VACCINE TODAY!!!**

Note: *Antibiotics are not effective against coronaviruses because antibiotics do not treat viruses, only bacteria.*

MINIMIZING STIGMA AND MISINFORMATION

- Know your facts about COVID-19.
- People of Asian descent are not more likely to get COVID-19 than anyone else and should be treated without discrimination.
- People who returned from 14 days of quarantine or isolation do not put others at risk.
- Provide social support for people who are worried about friends or relatives in the affected regions.

DOES NEWARK HAVE A PLAN?

Yes, Newark has a plan. The Newark Department of Health and Community Wellness (NDHCW) has developed a written plan supported by the Mayor and the Administration for a Newark specific response, drawing from guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the US Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH), and the White House. Newark's team participates on all federal, state, county and local conference calls and communicates with Newark and county hospitals and medical facilities and the Newark Public Schools, as well as schedules practice responses.

SURVEILLANCE & TESTING

NJDOH currently has the ability to test for COVID-19 and a protocol is in place to facilitate testing. NJDOH and the NDHCW also has a system in place for ongoing surveillance.

REMEMBER: STAY CALM AND BE INFORMED!

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON UPDATES AND TRAVEL:

- Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/summary.html>
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>
- Visit the New Jersey Department of Health website at <https://www.state.nj.us/health/cd/topics/ncov.shtml>
- Visit the City of Newark's website at <https://www.newarknj.gov>
- Call New Jersey Poison Information and Education System (NJPIES) 24/7 Hotline at 800-222-1222.
<https://www.njpies.org>

