

## COVID-19 Frequency Asked Questions

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

### What is the novel coronavirus?

A novel coronavirus is a new coronavirus that has not been previously identified. The virus causing coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), is not the same as the coronaviruses that commonly circulate among humans and cause mild illness, like the common cold.

### Why is the disease being called coronavirus disease, COVID-19?

In COVID-19, 'CO' stands for 'corona,' 'VI' for 'virus,' and 'D' for disease. Formerly, this disease was referred to as "2019 novel coronavirus" or "2019-nCoV".

### What is the source of the virus?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that cause illness in people. Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) are two other examples of coronaviruses that originated from animals and then spread to people. More information about the source and spread of COVID-19 is available on the Situation Summary: [Source and Spread of the Virus](#).

### Can someone who has had COVID-19 spread the illness to others?

The virus that causes COVID-19 is spreading from person-to-person. Someone who is actively sick with COVID-19 can spread the illness to others. That is why the CDC recommends that these patients be isolated either in the hospital or at home (depending on how sick they are) until they are better and no longer pose a risk of infecting others.

### What is the difference between isolation and quarantine?

- Isolation separates sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick.
- Quarantine separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick.

### In COVID-19, when can someone be released from isolation and quarantine?

Current CDC guidance for when it is OK to release someone is made on a case-by-case basis and includes meeting all of the following requirements:

- The patient is free from fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- The patient is no longer showing symptoms, including cough.
- The patient has tested negative on at least two consecutive respiratory specimens collected at least 24 hours apart.

Someone who has been released is not considered to pose a risk of infection to others.



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### How can I help protect myself?

The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus.

The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.

- *Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet), respiratory droplets are produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.*

Take Steps to Protect Yourself:

- Clean your hands often
- Don't touch your face (eyes, nose, mouth)
- Avoid skin contact with common public surfaces such as light switches, door handles, doors, etc.
- Frequently clean and disinfect common surfaces at home and work such as countertops, cell phones and computers.
- Avoid close contact
- Cover coughs and sneezes preferably with a disposable tissue that can be discarded or into your arm
- Wear a facemask if you are sick and avoid coughing and sneezing on people.

[Learn more>>](#)

### What should I do if I come in contact with someone who has COVID-19?

Your healthcare provider and public health staff will evaluate whether you can be screened and cared for at home. If it is determined that you do not need to be hospitalized and can be isolated at home, you will be asked to take your temperature at least twice daily and report the results to your primary care provider or health care professional. You should follow the prevention steps below until a healthcare provider says you can return to your normal activities.

- Stay home except to get medical care
- Separate yourself from other people and animals in your home
- Call ahead before visiting your doctor
- Wear a facemask
- Cover your coughs and sneezes
- Clean your hands often
- Avoid sharing personal household items
- Clean all "high-touch" surfaces daily
- Monitor your symptoms

### How can people help stop the stigma related to COVID-19?

People can fight stigma and help, not hurt, others by providing social support. Counter stigma by learning and sharing facts. Communicating the facts that viruses do not target specific racial or ethnic groups and how COVID-19 actually spreads can help stop the stigma.

### If there is a COVID-19 patient confirmed in the hill country how will the public be made aware?

HCM is required to comply with patient privacy rules and regulations (HIPPA) as well as report all positive infectious diseases to local, state and federal health agencies. HCM will not notify anyone but the appropriate health agency(ies).

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**If I was exposed or I came in contact with an individual who tested positive for COVID-19, how will I know?**

HCM will work closely with the appropriate health agency(ies) to mitigate the potential spread by identifying and tracking potential contacts. At that time, the appropriate health agency will notify all contacts and provide additional guidance as needed.

**If I am tested for COVID-19, how long does the testing take to be confirmed?**

Currently, testing is estimated to take three to five days.

**Why does it take so long?**

Testing must be conducted in CDC approved locations, many labs can provide testing, however, HCM is not one. The timeframe is three to five days due to the rapid spread, lab locations and increased number of tests being ordered.