Coronavirus (COVID-19): What you need to know

This is a new version of a virus type that has been around for a long time. When a coronavirus causes the common cold, few people worry. A lot is being said, researched, and learned in a hurry about COVID-19. While that work goes on, you need to pay attention and protect yourself.

About 80 percent of people who get coronavirus will have a mild illness. About 15 percent will have a serious illness, and 5 percent may get very sick. In most cases, those who get very sick were already weakened by chronic disease and other medical problems.

COVID-19 spreads easily from person to person. The virus can live on surfaces touched, sneezed or coughed on by someone who already has it. It can survive on your hands, furniture, railings, doorknobs, desks, service utensils and other things we all use every day.

Wash hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds:
- As soon as you enter your home
- Before meals
- After you use the bathroom
- After you blow your nose, cough or sneeze

Cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue. Throw the tissue in the trash.

Avoid touching your face, especially your nose and mouth.

Pay attention to local news. Avoid public gatherings when the virus is in your community. Greet people by nodding and speaking instead of shaking hands. If you show any sign of illness, stay home – even if it means missing work. Your boss and co-workers will thank you.
There is no vaccine for COVID-19 yet. It could be a year or more before one has been tested and proved safe. In the meantime, do all you can for yourself and people you care about to avoid getting and sharing the virus. If you do get sick, **stay home.**

- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Get lots of rest.
- Take acetaminophen (Tylenol®) if you are feeling sick from a fever. Ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®) is not recommended. It may make symptoms worse.
- Try to avoid close contact with others in your home.

**If you feel seriously ill:**

1. Call your doctor’s office or Telephone Nurse Advisor at (608) 775-4454 or (800) 858-1050.
2. **After hours, weekends, and holidays,** call Telephone Nurse Advisor at (608) 775-4454 or (800) 858-1050. This line is staffed 24/7.
3. **In the case of an emergency, dial 911.**

You will be asked about recent travel, other health issues, and people you have been near in recent days.

Look for more information about the coronavirus at these websites:

**Gundersen Health System**  

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**  

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