



DELAWARE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Division of Public Health

This information was updated by the Delaware Division of Public Health on March 3, 2020.

Q: What is a novel coronavirus?

A: A novel coronavirus is a new coronavirus that has not been previously identified. It is named for the crownlike spikes that protrude from its surface. 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.

Q: How worried should I be?

A: The outbreaks in Asia, Europe and the Middle East are leading to fears of a global pandemic. While the U.S. recorded its first death in late February, the risk for people in Delaware and the rest of the country remains low at this time. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has warned that Americans should brace for the likelihood that the virus will spread to the U.S.

Q: How do I keep myself and my family safe?

A: Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly; avoid touching your face or mouth with unwashed hands; sneeze or cough into your elbow, or if you use a tissue, throw it away immediately; and stay home if you are sick. Listen for updated guidance from the Delaware Division of Public Health and check the DPH website at de.gov/coronavirus

Q: Should I travel?

A: For those considering travel outside of the country, check the [CDC's list of travel alerts](#) and the agency's recommendations for travel. Recommendations change frequently so you are encouraged to check the website frequently. There are currently no recommendations to limit travel within the U.S. Each person/family should make their own decision based on personal health factors and anticipated travel destinations. Find the CDC travel information at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>

Q: What are the symptoms?

A: Illnesses can be mild, or in some cases be severe enough to require hospitalization. Symptoms of this respiratory illness primarily include:

- Fever

- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Q: How is it spread?

- Through the air, by coughing and sneezing
- Close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands
- Touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes

Q: How contagious is the virus?

A: People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (the sickest). Some spread might be possible before people show symptoms; there have been reports of this occurring with this new coronavirus, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. The virus that causes COVID-19 seems to be spreading easily and sustainably in the community (“community spread”) in some affected geographic areas. Community spread means people have been infected with the virus in an area, including some who are not sure how or where they became infected.

Q: Is there a treatment?

A: There is no specific treatment for COVID-19. Individuals confirmed to have the disease, should receive medical support/care for the symptoms they are experiencing.

Q: How can people help stop stigma related to COVID-19?

A: 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 stigma.

Q: Should I wear a mask to prevent catching coronavirus disease?

A: CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19. You should only wear a mask if a healthcare professional recommends it. A facemask should be used by people who have COVID-19 and are showing symptoms. This is to protect others from the risk of getting infected. The use of facemasks also is crucial for health workers and other people who are taking care of someone infected with COVID-19 in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).

Q: I just returned from a country that has a travel alert for COVID-19, but feel fine. Can I go to work?

A: In order to ensure that returning travelers from countries with travel alerts of Level 2 or higher do not spread the disease to others, it is recommended that they remain at home for 14

days after their return from a trip, and monitor themselves for fever, coughing or shortness of breath. If you do develop symptoms, contact the Division of Public Health at 1-888-295-5156 for guidance on next steps. Fourteen days is the presumed incubation period for this virus, so remaining at home and avoiding large gatherings for this time will ensure that you do not spread the virus in the community if you develop symptoms.

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