



What Patients Should Know About COVID-19

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March 16, 2020

How does the virus spread?

Per the CDC and WHO this is unknown, but likely through the air, droplets, contact, and possibly fecal-oral routes. **Call your primary care Health Center for their advice about how to get tested. DO NOT go to any clinic or emergency department in person unless directed to do so.**

How do we prevent the spread of COVID-19?

Airborne precautions

- The virus can survive in the air for up to three hours
- Perform diagnostic testing outdoors in drive through clinics (open air)
- Isolate patients at home – preferably in one well ventilated room (open windows)
- Hospitals will use negative pressure rooms (if available)
- Unaffected caregivers should use a fitted N-95 mask (if available)
- Affected patients should be given a traditional surgical mask (if available)

Droplet & contact precautions

- The virus can survive on cardboard for 24 hours
- The virus can survive on stainless steel and plastic for 72 hours
- Stop shaking hands and giving hugs
- Stay at least six feet away from others in public spaces
- Clean affected areas with diluted bleach or 70% alcohol solutions [per the CDC](#)
- Wear gloves when cleaning (if available) & wash hands for 20+ seconds
- Avoiding touching eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
- Sneeze or cough into your armpit or elbow, not in your hands

Frequent screenings (staff and patients)

- Use thermometers to screen and note if anyone was on a fever-reducing medication
- Ask yourself whether you feel feverish, have a cough, or have shortness of breath
- A fever is defined as 100.4° F [37.8° C]
- Do not return to work until you are fever free (without taking any ibuprofen or acetaminophen) and without other symptoms for at least twenty four hours ([per CDC](#))

Avoid groups

- Many communities are limiting large gatherings of people (especially > 250)
- Minimize use of public transportation – especially in crowded areas / peak times
- Cook at home rather than eating out

How do I limit my individual risk of getting the virus?

- Avoid medications (if possible) that might suppress your immune system ([CDC link](#))
 - Oral corticosteroids
 - TNF (Tumor Necrosis Factor) Inhibitors (aka “biologics”)
 - Chemotherapy
- Consider taking vitamin C 500mg three times daily
- Get plenty of sleep and exercise with a healthy diet
- If you have been prescribed hydroxychloroquine for a chronic condition, stay on it

If you are looking for additional resources, we recommend you start here:

[COVID-19 Page for the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine](#)

[COVID-19 Page for the National Commission on Correctional Health Care](#)

