



COVID19 Pandemic

What is a pandemic?

A pandemic is the worldwide spread of a new disease, crossing international boundaries and usually affecting a large number of people.

The impact or severity tends to be higher in pandemics because of the large number of people who lack pre-existing immunity to the new disease. When a large number of people are infected, even if the proportion of those with severe disease is small, the total number can be quite large.

In the context of COVID19, the World Health Organization declared the outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 30 January 2020, and a pandemic on 11 March 2020.

What is COVID19 Infection?

COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by a new strain of coronavirus.

How is it transmitted?

COVID-19 is passed on through contact with respiratory droplets (saliva or mucus from the nose or mouth) from someone who has COVID-19. These tiny droplets are spread when an infected person sneezes, coughs, breathes, speaks or sings. This also occurs when the other person touches the droplets and then touches own face – particularly eyes, nose or mouth – without washing their hands first.

Although the new coronavirus weakens and dies over time outside of the human body, studies suggest that it can live on surfaces for a few hours or up to several days, depending on surface, temperature and other environmental factors.

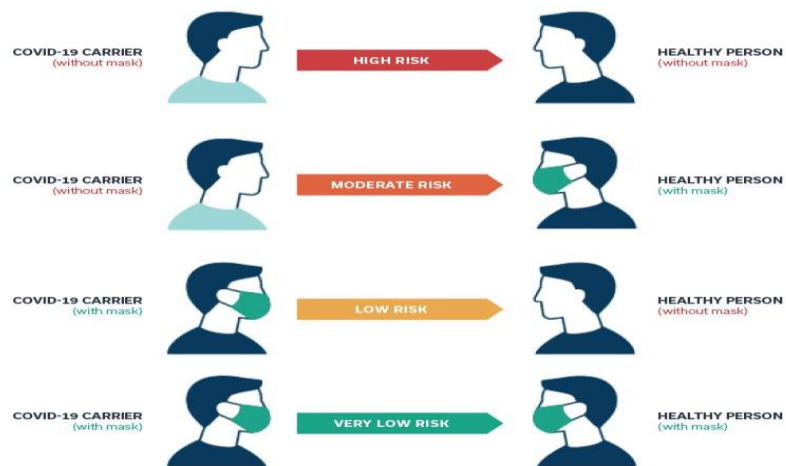
There is evidence that COVID-19 is passed on more easily in indoor, crowded and poorly ventilated places where people are closer together for long periods of time. According to the Food and Drug Administration (USA) eating food or handling food packaging has caused no cases of COVID-19. COVID-19 is not a sexually transmitted infection. However, having sex with someone means getting very close to them, which can spread the virus if one of the persons has COVID-19.

How can it be prevented?

Multiple precautions need to be taken to prevent the infection. Critical precautions are wearing a mask, maintaining social distance and washing hands.

Mask: People have to

- Wear a surgical disposable mask with a double layer of a cloth so as to ensure it fits well and covers the nose and mouth at all times.
- Wear an N95 mask in case of possible exposure to positive and / or symptomatic cases.
- Ensure that they do not put a mask on children under 2 years of age, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is not able to remove mask without help since they can choke.
- Risk is least when both virus carrier as well as health person wear a mask



To stop the spread of COVID-19 in our community, practice physical distancing, wash your hands often and wear a mask in public

Social distancing: People have to

- Maintain a distance of 6 feet or two arm length from other person when outside
- Avoid unnecessary trips outside the house
- Avoid places that are crowded, confined or involve close contact



Hand washing: People have to

- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (*Hum the “Happy Birthday” from beginning to end twice*) after opening the door, returning from an outside trip/errand/ vegetable shopping/ handling money, receiving packages. It’s especially important to wash hands before eating or preparing food and after using the restroom or leaving a public place or blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing or caring for someone sick. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Other precautions: People have to

- Use the inside of elbow to cover mouth while sneezing or coughing
- Clean high-touch surfaces and objects (doorknobs, tables, handles, light switches, phones, remote controls, and countertops) regularly (for example, daily or after each use) and after having visitors at home.

What are the common signs and symptoms?

- fever,
- nasal congestion
- sore throat, dry cough,
- tiredness,
- loss of taste or smell
- conjunctivitis (red eyes),
- headache, muscle or joint pain,
- skin rash,
- loss of appetite, nausea or vomiting, diarrhoea,
- chills or dizziness.

Some people with serious disease present with

- breathlessness,
- confusion,
- chest pain

The likelihood becoming severely ill is higher for people over 60 and those with certain underlying health issues, including high blood pressure, heart or lung problems, diabetes, obesity or cancer.

The average time for symptoms of COVID-19 to develop is five to six days, but it can take up to 14 days for people to show symptoms.

Some people do not have any symptoms even if they have the covid19 virus infection

The Mayo clinic offers this checklist to distinguish between common cold and covid.

Symptom or sign	COVID-19	Cold
Cough	Usually (dry)	Usually
Muscle aches	Usually	Sometimes
Tiredness	Usually	Sometimes
Sneezing	Rarely	Sometimes
Sore throat	Usually	Usually
Runny or stuffy nose	Usually	Usually
Fever	Usually	Sometimes
Diarrhoea	Sometimes	Never
Nausea or vomiting	Sometimes	Never
New loss of taste or smell	Usually (early — often without a runny or stuffy nose)	Sometimes (especially with a stuffy nose)

While COVID-19 symptoms generally appear two to 14 days after exposure to SARS-CoV-2, symptoms of a common cold usually appear one to three days after exposure to a cold-causing virus.

When should one get tested?

A person should be tested if she/he has symptoms mentioned above or has been in close contact with someone who has those symptoms or has tested positive. It is advised to call doctor to about the need and timing of a test.

The testing is done using a nasal swab which looks for the presence of the virus.

A negative test does not mean that the person is immune or not infected. He/she still needs to follow the precautionary advice for this pandemic.

How can the infection be managed?

Most people will recover from COVID-19 by themselves with home based care, without the need for hospital treatment usually within about fourteen days.

If the person has signs and symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19 and has mild symptoms:

Isolation: Person has to

- Stay at home and self-isolate. Use a separate bedroom and bathroom as far as possible. If separate room is not available, person has to ensure that the room has good air flow with open windows, wear a proper mask and maintain 6 feet distance from other members at home—all of whom also have to wear a proper mask at all times.

- Not share dishes, cups/glasses, silverware, towels, bedding, or electronics (like a cell phone)
- Avoid having visitors.
- Monitor symptoms, temperature, respiration, and oxygenation every four hours. Pulse oximeter can be used to monitor oxygen saturation in the initial stages of the disease when the patient does not have any signs of breathlessness.
- Be in touch with a health service provider (doctor) for advice and not visit the clinic unless symptoms are serious or worsening or person is high risk
- Ensure that other household members also stay at home for at least 14 days from the day of development of symptoms in the case.

Medication:

- So far, no drugs are proven to specifically treat COVID-19.
- Antibiotics do not work against viruses. Consume any medication after consultation with a health service provider
- Rest, drinking lots of liquids, and medication for fever (under advice) or other home remedies can help with symptoms. Traditional and / or home remedies may alleviate symptoms.
- Follow regular treatment for any pre-existing medical condition and ensure at least a 30-day supply of prescription and non-prescription medicines. Do not delay getting emergency medical care for this condition because of COVID-19

Hospitalisation

According to India's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, seek immediate medical attention if there is

- Difficulty in breathing
- High-grade fever, severe cough, particularly if more than five days
- Use a lower threshold for those with co-morbidities such as hypertension and diabetes

Oxygen:

- Cases with breathlessness, oxygen levels dropping below 93 may require oxygen supplementation. Consult a doctor immediately or go to the hospital
- The prone position, or lying face down (on the stomach) has been found to improve oxygen levels.
- Happy hypoxia - In some cases oxygen falls below 93 with patient having no symptoms. This patient needs oxygen.

Vaccination

- Get Vaccinated
- Authorized COVID-19 vaccines can help protect you from COVID-19.

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