

Coronaviruses | How to reduce your risk of infection

- ◆ Clean your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub
- ◆ Cover nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing with a tissue or flexed elbow
- ◆ Avoid close contact with anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms
- ◆ Thoroughly cook meat and eggs
- ◆ No unprotected contact with live wild or farm animals

Source: WHO

What is the difference between a coronavirus and a flu virus?

Coronaviruses and flu viruses might cause similar symptoms but genetically they are very different.

“Flu viruses incubate very rapidly – you tend to get symptoms two to three days after being infected, but coronaviruses take much longer,” said Professor Neil Ferguson, a disease outbreak scientist at Imperial College London.

Prevention Steps for Close Contacts

If you have had close contact with someone who is confirmed to have, or being evaluated for, 2019-nCoV infection, you should:

- Monitor your health starting from the day you first had close contact with the person and continue for 14 days after you last had close contact with the person. Watch for these signs and symptoms:
 - Fever. Take your temperature twice a day.
 - Coughing.
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing.
 - Other early symptoms to watch for are chills, body aches, sore throat, headache, diarrhea, nausea/vomiting, and runny nose.
- If you develop fever or any of these symptoms, call your healthcare provider right away.
- Before going to your medical appointment, be sure to tell your healthcare provider about your close contact with someone who is confirmed to have, or being evaluated for, 2019-nCoV infection. This will help the healthcare provider's office take steps to keep other people from getting infected. If you do not have any symptoms, you can continue with your daily activities, such as going to work, school, or other public areas.

How are coronaviruses transmitted?

Like other coronaviruses – such as the common cold – the virus is spread via droplets when a person coughs or sneezes. It can also be spread when someone touches a

contaminated surface such as a door handle or when people touch their infected hands to their mouth, nose or eyes.

How can I protect myself from catching the new coronavirus?

Hand hygiene is the first and most important line of defence.

Other tips include:

- Carry a hand sanitiser with you to make frequent cleaning of hands easy
- Always wash your hands before you eat
- Be especially careful in busy airports and other public transport systems about touching things and then touching your face
- Carry disposable tissues with you and always cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze before disposing of the tissue carefully (catch it, bin it, kill it)
- Do not share snacks from packets or bowls that others are dipping their fingers into
- Avoid shaking hands or cheek kissing if you suspect viruses are circulating
- Regularly clean, not just your hands, but commonly used surfaces and devices you touch or handle

Cover your coughs and sneezes

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or you can cough or sneeze into your sleeve. Throw used tissues in a lined trash can, and immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds

Wash your hands

Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. You can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available and if your hands are not visibly dirty. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Avoid sharing household items

You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding, or other items with other people. After using these items, you should wash them thoroughly with soap and water.