

General information about COVID-19:

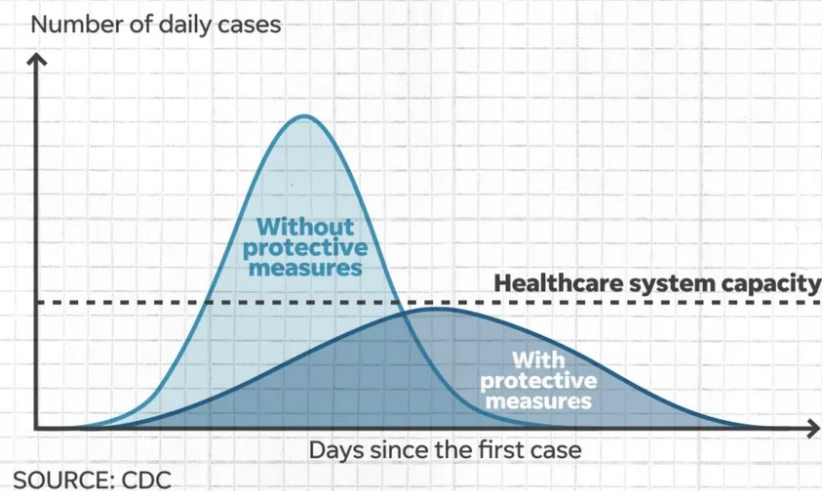
- The novel coronavirus is a newly identified strain of a known virus family called coronaviruses. The common cold is an example of another strain of a coronavirus. The novel coronavirus causes a disease called COVID-19.
- The physical risk to young, healthy individuals is thought to be low, however, the concern should be taken seriously as countries who are days and weeks ahead in the pandemic are indicating risk of severe illness at all age levels.
- Evidence thus far in the pandemic indicates that people are contagious and spread the virus 2-3 days before showing symptoms of illness, if they ever show symptoms. The COVID-19 pandemic is very different from prior serious outbreaks largely because of the spread by non-symptomatic individuals.

How to stay healthy:

- The advice that you're used to for cold and flu season applies here. Get enough sleep, reduce stress, eat healthful foods, and of course, wash your hands thoroughly and frequently when you are out of your home. In between hand washings, avoid putting your hands near your eyes, nose and mouth.
 - The good news is that viruses generally don't live for very long on your hands and skin, but the bad news is that people touch their faces constantly. If you keep your hands away from your face while you're out in public areas, any virus that gets on your hands will likely die on your hands without affecting you. Especially if you wash your hands regularly.
- The novel coronavirus can live on surfaces like plastic and stainless steel for up to several days, and for shorter durations (up to 24 hours) on softer surfaces like cardboard and fabrics. This means that if no one has been in a room for several days that room will likely be safe, but high traffic areas should be cleaned regularly.
- The novel coronavirus spreads from person to person primarily through respiratory droplets, and people who are infected may be able to infect others 2-3 days before they have symptoms. This means that limiting contact with other people is the best way to stay healthy. This is what "social distancing" is about:

SOCIAL DISTANCING

FAQs



What is social distancing? What am I supposed to do?

- The goal of social distancing is to both remain healthy and to avoid being a carrier of disease within the community.
- To observe social distancing, you should remain in your home, in your yard, or in non-public outdoor locations where you are 6+ feet from anyone not in self-isolation with you. This means not going to coffee shops, bars, restaurants, malls, and other public locations.
- You should not visit others and others should not visit you. It is okay for friends, family or delivery drivers to drop off food.
- Being outside is great! Go for walks, hikes, and bike rides, always remaining 6+ feet from others.
- Everyone in your house should practice social distancing. If they are not or can not, you should follow the precaution of remaining 6+ feet away from them, washing hands frequently, and not sharing space with them as much as possible, including bathrooms and bedrooms.
- You do not need weeks of supplies stockpiled. It is scary to see the grocery stores with empty shelves! They will restock. You can go to grocery stores and pharmacies for essentials. Wash your hands before you go, stay as far away from others as you can while you are there, don't touch your face while out, and wash your hands when you return home. Ordering takeout is thought to be fine.
- Practice social distancing, to the best of your ability, until this is over. It is difficult to estimate when this will be over.

Why does social distancing matter?

- Social distancing is the best protection from personal infection with COVID-19, as well as from spreading the disease and overwhelming the capacity and resources of the United States healthcare system. Severe illness may require hospital resources that will become scarce if immediate measures are not put in place to reduce the rate of transmission.
- Social distancing also protects those who are at greatest risk of (e.g., elderly and those with underlying health conditions).
- Without social distancing, as many as 2 million Americans may need intensive care within the next 2-3 months. At maximum capacity, the US healthcare system can accommodate 95,000 intensive care patients at one time. Many of those beds are already taken by patients with other conditions. Healthcare providers will be forced to make difficult decisions about which patients will receive life-saving measures, and which will not.

What is the difference between social distancing, quarantine, and isolation?

- Self-quarantine is voluntary, and means that healthy people who suspect potential exposure (e.g., have had known contact with an infected individual) do not go to work, school, or public areas, and avoid other members of their household, including using a separate bedroom and bathroom if possible.
 - In some situations governments may make quarantine mandatory, although this is uncommon in the US.
- Self-monitoring is appropriate when exposure is possible (e.g., you attended an event that an infected person also attended), but there has been no known direct contact with an infected person. Self-monitoring might include regularly checking your temperature and watching for signs of a respiratory illness, such as fever, cough or shortness of breath. It also involves limiting interaction with others (i.e., social distancing).
- Isolation occurs when confirmed cases of COVID-19 are separated from others for the duration of their illness (until they test negative for the virus twice 24-hours apart).
- The CDC recommends anyone with potential exposure (including returning home from an affected area) self-quarantine for 14 days.

*source: <https://www.usatoday.com/videos/news/justthefacts/2020/03/12/coronavirus-social-distancing-key-fighting-covid-19/5036385002/>