

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) FAQs



QUESTION: If people can spread the virus without showing any symptoms, how can I tell who's infected and who's not? You can't. That's why it's so critical to avoid crowds, stay at least 6 feet away from others, wash or disinfect your hands, and stop touching your face.

QUESTION: Is coronavirus more contagious than the flu? Yes, this is more contagious than the flu. Research indicates a person with the flu infects about 1.28 other people, on average. But with the novel coronavirus, it's likely between 2-3 other people.

QUESTION: How do I safely take care of someone who's sick? With the shortage of coronavirus testing nationwide, it may be difficult to know whether your loved one has coronavirus or another illness. So it's critical to play it safe and not infect yourself and, in turn, others.

The CDC suggests:

Give the sick person their own room to stay in, if possible. Keep the door closed. Have only one person serve as the caretaker. Ask the sick person to wear a face mask, if they are able to. If the mask causes breathing difficulties, then the caretaker should wear a mask instead. Officials say those who are healthy should not wear masks in public – in fact, that can cause more harm than good. Face masks may be in short supply and they should be saved for caregivers.

QUESTION: No one from my family has been exposed to the virus, and no one is sick. Can we get together for a family dinner? There are 10 of us, ages 4 to 88. You should cancel these gatherings for now. No one can say for sure that they haven't been exposed to the virus. Some carriers of coronavirus don't have any symptoms at all. But they can still pass on the virus without knowing it. We now know that asymptomatic transmission likely plays an important role in spreading this virus – which means someone could have the virus, spread it to someone else even though they don't appear sick. It's absolutely clear that asymptomatic infection can fuel a pandemic like this in a way that's going to make it very difficult to control. You can get together for a large family gathering to celebrate once the health crisis passes.

