

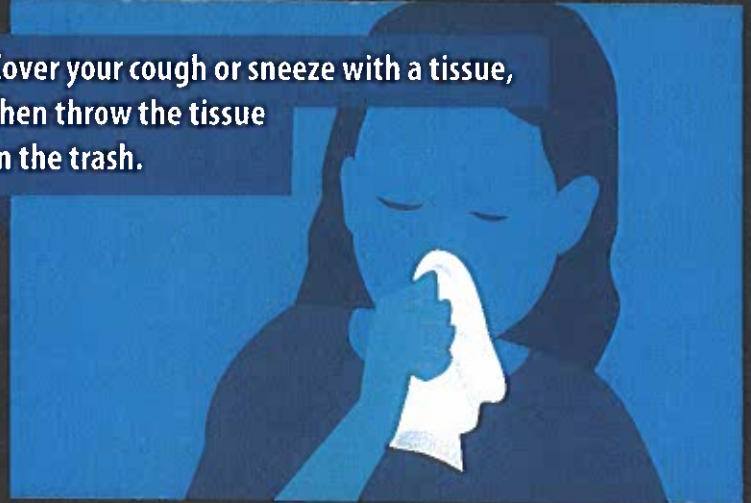
# STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

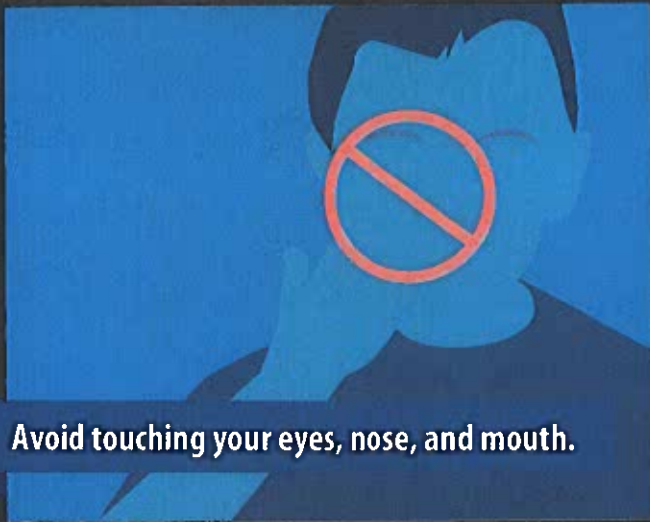
Avoid close contact with people who are sick.



Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.



Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.



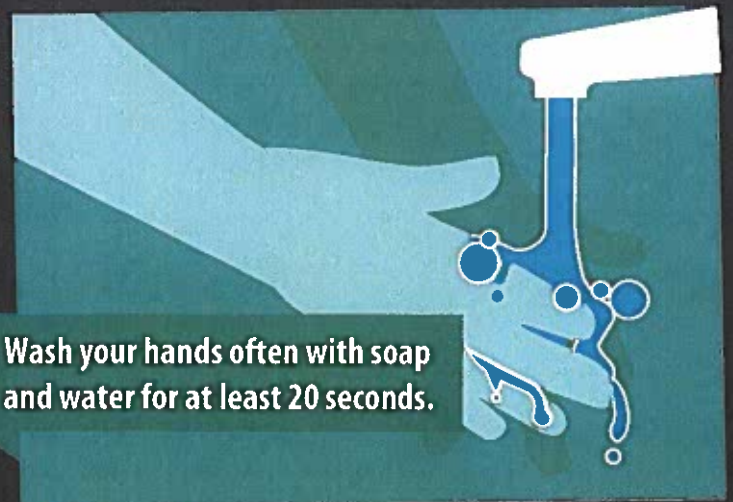
Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.



Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.



Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.



# What you need to know about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

## What is coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus that was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China.

## Can people in the U.S. get COVID-19?

COVID-19 is spreading from person to person in China, and limited spread among close contacts has been detected in some countries outside China, including the United States. At this time, however, this virus is NOT currently spreading in communities in the United States. Right now, the greatest risk of infection is for people in China or people who have traveled to China. Risk of infection is dependent on exposure. Close contacts of people who are infected are at greater risk of exposure, for example health care workers and close contacts of people who are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19. CDC continues to closely monitor the situation.

## Have there been cases of COVID-19 in the U.S.?

Yes. The first case of COVID-19 in the United States was reported on January 21, 2020. The current count of cases of COVID-19 in the United States is available on CDC's webpage at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html>.

## How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 probably emerged from an animal source, but now it seems to be spreading from person to person. It's important to note that person-to-person spread can happen on a continuum. Some diseases are highly contagious (like measles), while other diseases are less so. At this time, it's unclear how easily or sustainably the virus that causes COVID-19 is spreading between people. Learn what is known about the spread of newly emerged coronaviruses at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html>.

## What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of

- fever
- cough
- shortness of breath

## What are severe complications from this virus?

Many patients have pneumonia in both lungs.

## How can I help protect myself?

The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

## There are simple everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses. These include

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

## If you are sick, to keep from spreading respiratory illness to others, you should

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

## What should I do if I recently traveled to China and got sick?

If you were in China within the past 14 days and feel sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, you should seek medical care. Call the office of your health care provider before you go, and tell them about your travel and your symptoms. They will give you instructions on how to get care without exposing other people to your illness. While sick, avoid contact with people, don't go out and delay any travel to reduce the possibility of spreading illness to others.

## Is there a vaccine?

There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

## Is there a treatment?

There is no specific antiviral treatment for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 can seek medical care to help relieve symptoms.





# Frequently Asked Questions and Answers: Coronavirus Disease–2019 (COVID-19) and Children

See information on COVID-19 and pregnancy and neonates.

See CDC guidance related to COVID-19 and breastfeeding.

## **Q: Are children more susceptible to the virus that causes COVID-19 compared with the general population and how can infection be prevented?**

A: No, there is no evidence that children are more susceptible. In fact, most confirmed cases of COVID-19 reported from China have occurred in adults. Infections in children have been reported, including in very young children. From limited information published from past Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome coronavirus (SARS-CoV) and Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) outbreaks, infection among children was relatively uncommon.

For information on risk, please see current risk [assessment](#). Children should engage in usual preventive actions to avoid infection, including cleaning hands often using soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer, avoiding people who are sick, and staying up to date on vaccinations, including influenza vaccine. Additional information on prevention measures can be found here ([Prevention for 2019 Novel Coronavirus](#)).

## **Q: Does the clinical presentation of COVID-19 differ in children compared with adults?**

A: Limited reports of children with COVID-19 in China have described cold-like symptoms, such as fever, runny nose, and cough. Gastrointestinal symptoms (vomiting and diarrhea) have been reported in at least one child with COVID-19. These limited reports suggest that children with confirmed COVID-19 have generally presented with mild symptoms, and though severe complications (acute respiratory distress syndrome, septic shock) have been reported, they appear to be uncommon. See more information on CDC [Clinical Guidance for COVID-19](#).

## **Q: Are children at increased risk for severe illness, morbidity, or mortality from COVID-19 infection compared with adults?**

A: There have been very few reports of the clinical outcomes for children with COVID-19 to date. Limited reports from China suggest that children with confirmed COVID-19 may present with mild symptoms and though severe complications (acute respiratory distress syndrome, septic shock) have been reported, they appear to be uncommon. However, as with other respiratory illnesses, certain populations of children may be at increased risk of severe infection, such as children with underlying health conditions.

## **Q: Are there any treatments available for children with COVID-19?**

A: There are currently no antiviral drugs recommended or licensed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for COVID-19. Clinical management includes prompt implementation of [recommended infection prevention and control measures](#) in healthcare settings and supportive management of complications. See more information on CDC [Clinical Guidance for COVID-19](#).

Children and their family members should engage in usual preventive actions to prevent the spread of respiratory infections, including covering coughs, cleaning hands often with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer, and staying up to date on vaccinations, including influenza. Additional information on prevention measures can be found here ([Prevention for 2019 Novel Coronavirus](#)).

Page last reviewed: March 1, 2020

# Handwashing: Clean Hands Save Lives

## When and How to Wash Your Hands

Handwashing is one of the best ways to protect yourself and your family from getting sick. Learn when and how you should wash your hands to stay healthy.

### Wash Your Hands Often to Stay Healthy

You can help yourself and your loved ones stay healthy by washing your hands often, especially during these key times when you are likely to get and spread germs:

- **Before, during, and after** preparing food
- **Before** eating food
- **Before and after** caring for someone at home who is sick with vomiting or diarrhea
- **Before and after** treating a cut or wound
- **After** using the toilet
- **After** changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- **After** blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- **After** touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- **After** handling pet food or pet treats
- **After** touching garbage



### Follow Five Steps to Wash Your Hands the Right Way

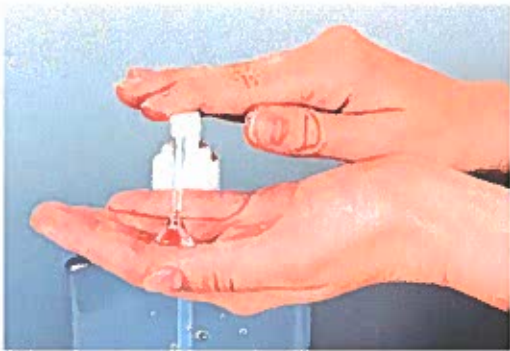
Washing your hands is easy, and it's one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of germs. Clean hands can stop germs from spreading from one person to another and throughout an entire community—from your home and workplace to childcare facilities and hospitals.

Follow these five steps every time.

1. **Wet** your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
2. **Lather** your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. **Scrub** your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.
4. **Rinse** your hands well under clean, running water.
5. **Dry** your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

**Why? Read the science behind the recommendations.**

## Use Hand Sanitizer When You Can't Use Soap and Water



You can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

Washing hands with soap and water is the best way to get rid of germs in most situations. If soap and water are not readily available, you can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. You can tell if the sanitizer contains at least 60% alcohol by looking at the product label.

**Sanitizers can quickly reduce the number of germs on hands in many situations. However,**

- Sanitizers do **not** get rid of all types of germs.
- Hand sanitizers may not be as effective when hands are visibly dirty or greasy.
- Hand sanitizers might not remove harmful chemicals from hands like pesticides and heavy metals.

**Caution!** Swallowing alcohol-based hand sanitizers can cause alcohol poisoning if more than a couple of mouthfuls are swallowed. Keep it out of reach of young children and supervise their use. Learn more [here](#).

## How to use hand sanitizer

- Apply the gel product to the palm of one hand (read the label to learn the correct amount).
- Rub your hands together.

- Rub the gel over all the surfaces of your hands and fingers until your hands are dry. This should take around 20 seconds.



This material was developed by CDC. The Life is Better with Clean Hands Campaign is made possible by a partnership between the CDC Foundation, GGLD, and Engage. HHS/CDC does not endorse commercial products, services, or companies.

## New Handwashing Campaign: *Life is Better with Clean Hands*

To celebrate Global Handwashing Day on October 15, CDC has launched the *Life is Better with Clean Hands* campaign. This campaign encourages adults to make handwashing part of their everyday life and encourages parents to wash their hands to set a good example for their kids. Visit the *Life is Better with Clean Hands* campaign page to download resources to help promote handwashing in your community.

For more information on handwashing, visit CDC's Handwashing website or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.