

Facts About COVID-19

What is COVID-19?

The 2019 coronavirus (COVID-19) is an infection caused by a virus. The virus leads to a respiratory illness. COVID-19 can spread from person to person. It has spread around the world, including in Lancaster County and the surrounding counties.

The symptoms of COVID-19 can include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing

The symptoms may appear 2-14 days after being exposed to the virus. Some people with the illness have few symptoms or no symptoms. Some people have become very ill and died.

How does it spread?

COVID-19 spreads just like the flu or a cold. The virus spreads in these ways:

- Through the air by coughing or sneezing.
- Through close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands.
- By touching an object or surface with the virus on it.

What can I do to prevent it?

- Stay home as much as possible. When you do have to go out in public places, keep 6 feet of distance between yourself and other people.
- Cover coughs or sneezes with your elbow. Do not use your hands!
- Avoid people who are sick. If you are sick, stay home until you are feeling better.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Clean surfaces often with a regular household cleaning spray or wipe. Surfaces include countertops, light switches, cell phones, doorknobs, toilets, sinks and other frequently touched items.

What should I do if I become sick?

If you have a cough, fever, or feel unwell, stay home and call your healthcare provider. They will help decide if you need care from a doctor or if you should have a COVID-19 test. In most cases, you can recover at home.

If you are sick, do not go to work, school, or public areas. Stay home.

- As much as possible, you should stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home.
- Use a separate bathroom, if available.
- Do not share dishes, towels, or bedding with others. After using these items, wash them thoroughly with soap and water.

Call 911 if you have any of these signs:

- Difficulty breathing
- Lasting pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or failure to stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

How can I protect older adults and people with health problems?

Some people are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. This includes:

- Older adults (over 65 years old)
- People who have serious chronic medical conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and lung disease

If you are in one of these groups, it is extra important for you to take reduce your risk of getting sick.

- Wash your hands frequently and practice the other everyday precautions.
- Stay home as much as possible.
- In public places, keep 6 feet of space between yourself and others.

How does COVID-19 affect pregnant women and children?

Pregnant women

- At this time, we do not know if pregnant women are at higher risk.
- Pregnant women should do the same things as the general public to avoid infection.

Children

- At this time, children do not appear to be at higher risk for COVID-19 than adults.
- Some children and infants have been sick with COVID-19. You can encourage your child to help stop the spread of COVID-19 by teaching them to do the same things everyone should do to stay healthy.

Where can I learn more?

Experts are learning new information about COVID-19 regularly. You can stay updated by reading local newspapers and using these reliable sources:

Lancaster General Health

lancastergeneralhealth.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html

Pennsylvania Department of Health

1-877-PA-HEALTH
www.health.pa.gov