



# Coronavirus COVID-19

BC Centre for Disease Control | BC Ministry of Health



## Key Facts

We are focused on slowing the spread of COVID-19 in our communities.

A sudden increase in people becoming infected with COVID-19 may impact the capacity of our health system to provide care to everyone who needs it.

By slowing the spread of the virus, our most vulnerable will be able to access care when and where they need it.

80% of people who are infected will have mild symptoms that will not require care outside of the home.

Around 1 out of 6 people who get COVID-19 may become seriously ill and develop difficulty breathing.

Older people, and those with preexisting medical conditions such as high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes, are more likely to develop serious illness.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO TO SLOW TRANSMISSION

Take care of others by taking care of yourself.

Wash your hands, don't touch your face, and stay home if you are sick.

Monitor yourself.

If you have a fever, a new cough or difficulty breathing, call 8-1-1 for guidance.

## WHAT BUSINESSES CAN DO TO SLOW TRANSMISSION

Support hand washing, social distancing, and adopt flexible sick-leave policies to allow people who are sick to stay home.

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces using routine practices and consider cleaning and disinfecting twice a day if possible.

## Frequently Asked Questions on New Coronavirus (COVID-19) for Children and Students

March 18, 2020

### 1. What is the new coronavirus?

The new coronavirus is a virus (type of germ) that causes lung infections in people. The disease is called COVID-19.

This is the first time this exact coronavirus has caused illness in people, but doctors and scientists know of other coronaviruses.

### 2. Where did the new coronavirus come from?

We think that this coronavirus usually lives in bats. At first, a person was infected from an animal, but now it is spreading from one person to another.

The first people to get sick were in a city in China called Wuhan, in a province called Hubei. Later, people were found to be sick in other provinces of China, and now people are sick in many countries across the world.



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### 3. What kind of illness does the new coronavirus cause?

The new coronavirus causes a respiratory (lung) infection. People who are sick with COVID-19 can have a fever or a cough. They may also have muscle aches or sore throat. Some people may feel short of breath.

Most healthy people who are infected with the new coronavirus will have a mild illness like a cold. A smaller number will be more sick, and will need to be in the hospital. Children and young people are more likely to have a mild illness.

### 4. How does the new coronavirus spread?

The new coronavirus spreads the same way as other viruses that cause colds and flus.

When people cough or sneeze, small droplets of liquid go into the air. If the person who is coughing or sneezing has the new coronavirus, there can be virus in those droplets that can make others sick.

One way that a person can get sick is by breathing in droplets that have virus in them when talking with or being close to someone who is sick. The other way is by touching something that droplets have landed on and then touching their mouth, nose, or eyes. Sharing utensils and dishes (forks and spoons, water bottles, drink containers, cups) could also spread the virus from someone who is sick to someone who is not.

A way we are asking people to help stop the coronavirus from spreading is by spending more time at home. By staying close to home and not going to places where a lot of people are, we reduce the chances the virus has to spread – this is called social isolating.

### 5. How can I avoid getting sick?

The best way to stay healthy is to wash your hands properly and often with soap and water. Washing your hands properly means using soap and water to wash for at least 20 seconds. If your hands look clean, you can use hand sanitizer with alcohol in it. If they have dirt or food or anything else on them, you should wash them with soap and water because hand sanitizer might not work. If you have to cough or sneeze, try to do it into your elbow or a tissue, then wash your hands afterwards. These things help protect you from the new coronavirus and also from influenza, colds, and other illnesses.

### 6. Should I stay home from school?

For right now, we have closed schools, to help stop the spread of the virus. Teachers will be working to find ways to help students learn from home. You will hear more about this in the next few weeks.

For now, the best thing you can do is stay home or stay away from places where there are lots of people.

### 7. Should I wear a mask?



You do not need to wear a mask if you are healthy. Masks are hard for students to wear, and they are not needed if you are not spending time close to people who are sick. If you are sick, you should stay home from school. Staying home is a better way to protect others than wearing a mask to school while sick.

Some cultures and families wear masks when they are well out of respect for others. Doctors and leaders in British Columbia do not think this is needed, but it is important to treat people with respect if they do choose to wear a mask.

## 8. Where can I get more information?

You can find trustworthy information about COVID-19 by visiting the website of the British Columbia Centre for Disease Control at [bccdc.ca/covid19](https://bccdc.ca/covid19) where there is the latest information about coronavirus and answers to other common questions. Some of the information on the website may be scientific or technical so it may be better to look at the website together with a teacher, parent or a trusted adult.

CBC Kids has made a good video that talks about myths kids might have heard about the new coronavirus. Check out the video and full story at: <https://www.cbc.ca/kidsnews/post/watch-coronavirus-facts-versus-fiction>

