Maryland

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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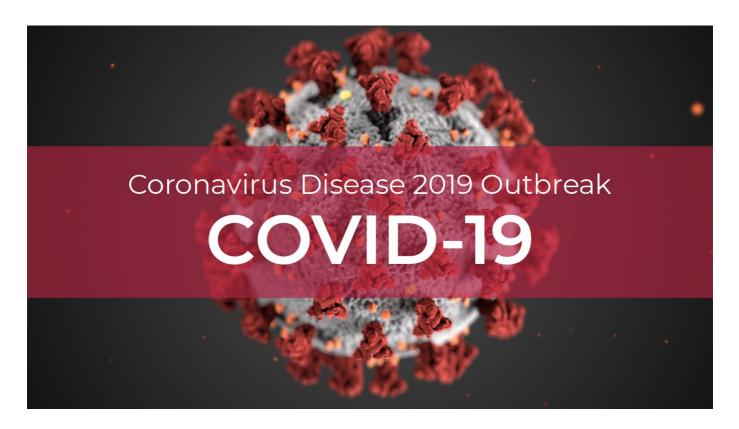**State Resources** »

March 11, 2020

Coronavirus Disease 2019 Outbreak
COVID-19

This is a rapidly evolving situation and the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) will provide updates as they become available.

COVID-19 Testing and Confirmed Case Counts in Maryland

Number of negative COVID-19 tests: 94
Number of positive COVID-19 tests: 9

NOTE: MDH is no longer reporting the pending number of tests as testing capacity has expanded to include commercial laboratories. Commercial laboratories report all results to MDH – positive results are reported in real time.

COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions for Older Adults

COVID-19 Background

COVID-19 is a disease caused by a respiratory virus first idenitfied in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in December 2019. COVID-19 is a new virus that hasn't caused illness in humans before. Worldwide, COVID-19 has resulted in thousands of infections, causing illness and in some cases death. Cases have spread to countries throughout the world, with more cases reported daily.

COVID-19 is thought to be able to spread like the cold or flu through:

- coughing and sneezing, which creates respiratory droplets
- close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands
- touching an object or surface with the virus on it

Symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- fever
- coughing
- shortness of breath
- in more severe cases, pneumonia (infection in the lungs)

The vast majority of people recover from this infection. Most people will have mild or moderate symptoms. Older people and those with pre-existing medical conditions have a greater risk for more serious illness.

Prevention

There is currently no vaccine for COVID-19. Many experts are at work developing one. As with any new vaccine, it must be tested to make certain it is safe and effective. It may take over a year for a COVID-19 vaccine to become available.

You can take everyday preventive steps that are always recommended to slow the spread of respiratory illnesses like colds and flu:

- wash your hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds
- use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol if soap and water are not available
- cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue, your sleeve or your elbow
- avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using standard cleaning practices
- avoid close contact with people who are sick
- if you are sick, stay home, except when seeking medical care

Those at Higher Risk of Becoming Seriously from COVID-19:
Older Adults and Individuals with Pre-Existing Medical Conditions

Older adults (age 60+) and those with pre-existing medical conditions have a greater risk for serious illness, and in some cases death, if they become infected with COVID-19. Examples of pre-existing medical conditions include: cancer, diabetes, heart disease and other conditions that impact the immune system's ability to fight germs.

Currently, people are at risk for contracting COVID-19 who:

- recently traveled to geographic areas of concern
- have close, personal contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19
- care for people with COVID-19

If you are an older adult or you have one and more chronic health conditions, you can take action to reduce your risk of exposure to COVID-19:

- take everyday precautions to keep space between yourself and others
- when you go out in public, keep away from others who are sick, limit close contact and wash your hands often with soap and water or hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol content
- avoid crowds as much as possible

Guidance for Travelers
At this time, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that people who are at risk for serious illness, including older adults and those with pre-existing medical conditions, avoid cruise travel and non-essential air travel.

If you must travel, CDC is updating travel advisories as warranted and has advised against nonessential travel to some geographic areas of concern. Those with underlying health conditions are advised to avoid nonessential travel to certain areas as well.

Visit the CDC travel advisory site to check on current travel warnings if you are planning a trip abroad.

Preparedness Measures
You can prepare in the following ways:

- Have an adequate supply of nonprescriptive drugs and other health supplies on hand, including pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines
- Check your regular prescription drugs to make sure you have an adequate supply; refill your prescriptions if needed
- Have a thermometer, tissues and hand santizer in case you become ill and must stay at home to recover
- Talk with family members and loved ones about how they would be cared for if they got sick and what will be needed to care for them at home
- Have a two-week supply of water and food at home

Information for Clinicians and Infection Preventionists
Recommendations for Infection Control and COVID-19 Prevention in Facilities Serving Older Adults
MDH Laboratory COVID-19 Guidance
MDH Coronavirus Clinician Letter -- March 6, 2020
MDH Coronavirus Clinician Letter -- January 31, 2020
MDH Coronavirus Clinician Letter -- Janurary 21, 2020
Coronavirus Alert Sign (for Clinicians)
Coronavirus Alert Sign (for Patients)
Coronavirus Alert Sign (for Patients) -- Mandarin Translation

Information for Local Health Departments

Novel Coronavirus Update for Local Health Departments -- March 3, 2020
Novel Coronavirus Update for Local Health Departments -- February 25, 2020
Novel Coronavirus Update for Local Health Departments -- February 18, 2020
Novel Coronavirus Update for Local Health Departments -- February 11, 2020
Novel Coronavirus Update for Local Health Departments -- February 4, 2020
Novel Coronavirus Update for Local Health Departments -- January 28, 2020

Information for Schools

Novel Coronavirus FAQ for K-12

CDC Resources

CDC Novel Coronavirus Outbreak Website
CDC Flowchart to Identify and Assess COVID-19
CDC Novel Coronavirus Fact Sheet
CDC Interim Guidance for Healthcare Professionals
CDC Interim Guidance for Infection Control
CDC Information for Laboratories
CDC Interim Guidance on Mass Gatherings or Large Community Events

Other Resources

WHO Coronavirus Website

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About MDH

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