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### Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

*Page updated: Thursday, March 12, 2020 3:54 pm*

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**If you have questions about COVID-19, call the Washington State Department of Health hotline at 1-800-525-0127 and press #.**

#### 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Whatcom County

*This information will be updated daily at 12:00 pm, or sooner if significant developments occur. Last updated: Thursday, March 12, 2020 11:47 am.*

- ^Pending Results:19

- **\*\*Confirmed Cases: 1**
- **\*Negative Results: 18**

**^Pending Results:** *The current number of test results pending for people who meet the criteria for priority testing defined by Washington State Department of Health. It does not represent the total number of people in Whatcom County who have been tested for COVID-19 because some tests are sent directly to commercial labs by a healthcare provider without consultation with the health department.*

**\*\* Confirmed Cases:** *Positive test results reported from any lab.*

**\*Negative Results:** *Negative test results include test results for people under public health investigation for which all specimens submitted have been finalized.*

## What should I do if I'm sick?

**Stay home when you are sick.** Do not go out in public until your symptoms have resolved.

- **If you have cold or flu symptoms, especially cough or fever, it is important that you stay home and away from others.** If you have questions about specific symptoms or care, contact your healthcare provider. Call ahead to your provider before going into a clinic or other health care facility.
- **For those who have symptoms like cough or shortness of breath, contacting your regular medical provider is the best thing to do unless you have an urgent need that requires immediate care.** Most cough and cold illnesses can be cared for at home, with advice from a health care provider over the telephone if needed.
- **If you have symptoms and must go out in public, wear a mask.** People who are sick with respiratory symptoms, like a cough or sneezing, should wear a mask in public places to prevent the spread of illnesses to others in the area.

**Please do not go to emergency rooms or urgent care clinics if your illness is mild and can be managed at home.** These facilities need to have the ability to serve those who are in most critical need. We also want to limit unnecessary visits to protect health care providers and other patients from catching infections.

These resources from the Washington State Department of Health have answers about possible exposures:

- [What to do if you have symptoms of COVID-19 and have not been around anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 \(PDF\).](#)
- [What to do if you have confirmed or suspected COVID-19 \(PDF\).](#)

## What should I do if I think I've been exposed to someone with COVID-19?

- Public health disease investigators do contact investigations to identify and communicate with individuals who have had close contact with a confirmed case.
- Contact investigations include talking with the confirmed case about where they were during their infectious period and who they may have had contact with for more than 10 minutes in a space of less than 6 feet.
  - If you have been in close contact (within 6 ft) of a confirmed case, you should monitor your health for symptoms of fever, cough, and shortness of breath.
  - If you are not sick, you should monitor your health for fever, cough and shortness of breath during the 14 days after the last day you were in close contact with the sick person with COVID-19. You should not go to work or school, and should avoid public places for 14 days.
  - If you get sick with fever, cough or shortness of breath (even if your

symptoms are very mild), you should stay at home and away from other people. If you have any of the following conditions that may increase your risk for a serious infection—age 60 years or over, are pregnant, or have medical conditions—contact your physician’s office and tell them that you were exposed to someone with COVID-19. They may want to monitor your health more closely or test you for COVID-19.

- Read the Washington State Department of Health’s [What to do if you may have been exposed to a person with COVID-19](#) (PDF).

## Testing for COVID-19

**Anyone can be tested for COVID-19. But not everyone needs to be tested for COVID-19.**

Healthcare providers may test any patient they suspect could have COVID-19. Call your health care provider, and they will talk with you about whether or not you need to be tested for COVID-19.

**Testing is a limited resource.** That’s why it is important to prioritize testing for certain groups, including:

- Health care workers.
- Close contacts of people with confirmed COVID-19.
- Patients with severe or worsening respiratory illness.
- Those at high risk for severe illness.

**There are not currently any specific medications for COVID-19, so whether you test positive or negative your healthcare provider’s advice for managing your symptoms will be the same.** The majority of infections with novel coronavirus are mild and resolve without the need for supportive treatment. If you are able to manage your symptoms at home, you should stay home and avoid contacting others.

For more information about testing, visit the [Washington State Department of Health testing webpage](#).

## Additional Resources

- [Washington State Novel Coronavirus Outbreak 2020](#) (Washington State Department of Health)
- [2019 Novel Coronavirus](#) (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention)
  - What You Need to Know (PDF) - [English](#) | [Chinese](#) | [Spanish](#)
- [COVID-19 Outbreak](#) (World Health Organization)
- [COVID-19 Glossary](#) (PDF)

## Contact Us



Whatcom County  
**HEALTH**  
Department


Email for COVID19: [covid@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:covid@co.whatcom.wa.us)

Email for general info: [health@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:health@co.whatcom.wa.us)

Media Inquiries:

[health-PIO@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:health-PIO@co.whatcom.wa.us)

[Concerns About COVID-19 \(PDF\)](#)



[Spanish](#)

# Concerns about COVID-19?


[Russian](#)

Do these things to prevent any kind of respiratory illness

[COVID-19 Personal Preparedness \(PDF\)](#)

**If you are sick:**

- If you have symptoms like cough, fever, or other respiratory problems,

  
Updated March 5, 2020

## How Can I Be Prepared for a COVID-19 Outbreak?

[English](#)

[Spanish](#)

[Russian](#)

[Ukrainian](#)

[Chinese \(Simplified\)](#)

[Chinese \(Traditional\)](#)

[Vietnamese](#)

[Novel Coronavirus Fact Sheets \(PDF\)](#)

- COVID-19 is a new respiratory virus. There are no treatments for it. Most people will recover on their own, but some people can develop pneumonia and require medical care or hospitalization.
- As new information emerges from across the globe, please remember that the risk of COVID-19 is not at all connected with race, ethnicity or nationality. [Stigma will not help to fight the illness](#). Seeking and sharing accurate information during a time of heightened concern is one of the best things we can do to keep rumors and misinformation from spreading.

**How can I prevent the spread of COVID-19?**

- [Symptoms](#) of COVID-19 primarily include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. These symptoms appear 2 to 14 days after exposure.
- COVID-19 [spreads between people](#) who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) via coughs or sneezes. It may also spread by touching a surface or object with the virus on it.
- People are thought to be [most contagious](#) when they are the sickest, though some spread is possible before people show symptoms.

**Prevent illness with good personal health habits:** stay home when you're sick, cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue, wash your hands often with soap and water, and clean frequently touched surfaces and objects.

- Getting plenty of rest, drinking fluids, eating healthy foods, and managing your stress may help you prevent getting COVID-19 and recover from it if you do.

**How do I plan ahead for COVID-19?**

- Make an emergency plan of action with your household members, relatives, and friends. Visit [Emergency Preparedness and You](#) for more information.
- If the disease starts spreading in your area, health officials might recommend to close schools or cancel events and encourage people to work remotely to slow the spread of the disease.

To request this document in another format, call 1-800-525-0127. Deaf or hard of hearing customers, please call 711 ([Washington Relay](#)) or email [civil.rights@doh.wa.gov](mailto:civil.rights@doh.wa.gov).

[English](#)

[Spanish](#)

[Russian](#)

Chinese ([Simplified](#))

Chinese ([Traditional](#))

# Novel Coronavirus



Whatcom County  
**HEALTH**  
Department



## What is novel coronavirus?

### FAQs

Novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) is a virus strain that has only spread in people since December 2019. Health experts are concerned because little is known about this new virus and it has the potential to cause severe illness and pneumonia in some people.

◦ [How severe is COVID-19?](#)

◦ [What is a coronavirus?](#)  
**How does novel coronavirus spread?**

◦ [How does novel coronavirus \(COVID-19\) spread?](#)  
Health experts are still learning the details about how this new coronavirus spreads. Other coronaviruses spread from an infected person to others through:

View  
All

- The air by coughing and sneezing.
- Close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands.
- Touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.
- In rare cases, contact with feces (poop).

## How severe is novel coronavirus?

Experts are still learning about the range of illness from novel coronavirus. Reported cases have ranged from mild illness (similar to a common cold) to severe pneumonia that requires hospitalization. So far, deaths have been reported mainly in older adults who had other health conditions.



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## What are the symptoms?

People who have been diagnosed with novel coronavirus have reported symptoms that may appear in as few as 2 days or as long as 14 days after they are exposed to the virus:

  
**Fever**  
*Sign Up for Notifications*

  
**Cough**  
*View Current Information*

  
**Agendas & Minutes**  
*View Current Information*

  
**Difficulty breathing**  
*View Current Information*

  
**FAQs**  
*We're Here to Help*

