COVID-19: What You Need to Know

What is COVID-19?
COVID-19 (coronavirus disease, 2019) is a disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Over one million people have died from COVID-19 in the U.S.

Basic Facts
- COVID-19 can be very contagious and spreads quickly
- Most people with COVID-19 have mild symptoms, but some people become severely ill
- Anyone infected with COVID-19 can spread it, even if they do NOT have symptoms

Getting a COVID-19 vaccine is a safer, more reliable way to build protection than getting sick with COVID-19.

Source: cdc.gov
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How it Spreads
COVID-19 spreads when an infected person breathes out small virus-infected droplets and particles. These droplets and particles can transmit COVID-19 when noninfected people breathe them in, or when the particles or droplets land in their eyes, nose, or mouth.

Symptoms
- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Source: cdc.gov

Diagnosis & Treatment
To test for the COVID-19 virus, a healthcare professional takes a sample from the nose, throat, or saliva. The samples are then sent to a lab for testing. Most people with COVID-19 have mild illness and can recover at home.

There are several antiviral medications used to treat mild to moderate COVID-19 in people who are more likely to get very sick, (people aged 50+, unvaccinated people, and those with certain medical conditions).

Prevention
COVID-19 vaccines are safe, effective, and free.