

# 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.



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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.

