



STAY SAFE & HEALTHY

# COVID-19 for Young People

## Take Action:

As young people, we have a unique opportunity to protect our loved ones and improve the health of our communities. We challenge you to **take action** to prevent new infections and take care of your communities.

You can find new ways to take action in the gray boxes throughout this document.

There is no cure or treatment for COVID-19 anywhere in the world. However, there are ways we can prevent the spread of COVID-19 and protect ourselves and our loved ones.

**Protect yourself and others - keep your distance, wash your hands, and cover your mouth.**

## ⇒ What is COVID-19?

COVID-19, also called coronavirus disease, is an infectious disease that infects both the lungs and the small intestine. The outbreak of the virus began in China in December 2019, and it is now a pandemic that affects almost all countries globally.

COVID-19 is caused by a newly discovered coronavirus called SARS-CoV-2.

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are known to cause illness in both humans and animals. In humans, several coronaviruses are known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). SARS-CoV-2 is the most recently discovered coronavirus and is known to cause COVID-19.

## ⇒ How does COVID-19 spread?

In order to understand how to prevent the transmission of COVID-19, we need to understand how it is transmitted.

The only way for a person to be infected with COVID-19 is if a fluid from a COVID-19 positive person comes into contact with the door of another person. There are only some fluids that can transmit the virus.

<p><b>Fluids</b> The fluids that can transmit COVID-19 from someone who has the virus are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Respiratory secretions, such as mucus or saliva</li> </ul>	<p><b>Doors</b> The doors that allow a fluid containing COVID-19 into the body are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mouth</li> <li>- Nose</li> <li>- Eyes</li> </ul>
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The above fluids are expelled as droplets into the air from the nose or mouth when a person with COVID-19 coughs, sneezes or speaks. Other people can catch COVID-19 if they breathe in these droplets or if they touch a surface containing these droplets and then touch their eyes, nose, or mouth. These fluids can then get into the lungs and make someone sick.

The skin acts as a wall against COVID-19, meaning that COVID-19 can't enter the body through the skin.

## ⇒ How do we prevent the spread of COVID-19?

There is currently no vaccine or cure available anywhere in the world for coronavirus disease (COVID-19). Since there is no treatment available, it is incredibly important that we prevent the spread of the disease and protect ourselves and our loved one.

We can't always see the fluids, like if they are on a surface, so it is really important that we take precautions. Here are some ways that we can prevent COVID-19:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid large events and gatherings.
- Practice physical distancing as much as possible. This means to stay about 2 meters away from other people, especially those with respiratory symptoms.
- Cover your mouth and nose with your elbow or a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw away the used tissue.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Wear a cloth face mask in public areas such as the market or on public transportation, where it's difficult to avoid close contact with others. This is especially important in areas with ongoing community spread.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces you often touch on a daily basis. This could include surfaces in your house or items like your phone and computer.



Wash your hands frequently.



Avoid touching your eyes, mouth, and nose.



Avoid crowded places.



Cover your cough with the bend of your elbow or with a tissue.



Stay at home if you feel unwell - even with a slight fever and a cough.



Stay aware of the latest information from your local health authority.

**Take Action:**

Create posters that show different prevention methods and hang them around your school and your communities. Posters are a great way of communicating information to a lot of people very quickly.

Use the prevention methods above and encourage others in your school and in your community to do the same. This includes washing your hands, not touching your face, and wearing a mask when possible.

**⇒ What happens when someone has COVID-19?**

COVID-19 infects both the lungs and the small intestine. People with COVID-19 report a wide range of symptoms – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms can appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. Someone with COVID-19 may have any of the following symptoms:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Fever or chills</li><li>● Cough</li><li>● Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing</li><li>● Fatigue</li><li>● Muscle or body aches</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Headache</li><li>● New loss of taste or smell</li><li>● Sore throat</li><li>● Congestion or runny nose</li><li>● Nausea or vomiting</li><li>● Diarrhea</li></ul>
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It is possible for the virus to be transmitted from one person to another even if the person with COVID-19 does not have any symptoms or feel sick. This means it is especially important for people to practice prevention techniques and physical distance as much as possible - even if someone doesn't feel sick.

If you (or someone you know) have minor symptoms, such as a slight cough or a mild fever, there is generally no need to seek medical care. In this case, you can stay at home, isolate from others, and monitor your symptoms. Seek immediate medical care if you have difficulty breathing or pain/pressure in the chest.

**Take Action:**

Take time to think about, and draw, the process of how the virus gets into our bodies and makes us sick. You can start by drawing the respiratory system on a blank piece of paper. This will help improve your understanding of how the virus works, as well as how it impacts individuals who are immunocompromised, such as those with HIV/AIDS.

**⇒ How does someone know if they have COVID-19?**

Testing is the only way to confirm whether or not someone has COVID-19. There are two kinds of tests for COVID-19 - viral tests and antibody tests. Viral tests are more common, and they tell us if someone currently has an infection by looking for the presence of the virus inside of the sample.

If someone receives a viral test for COVID-19 and it comes back positive, it means that they have the virus that causes COVID-19. Health professionals will guide their treatment and will ensure that the risk to others has been reduced. If the person tests negative for COVID-19 with a viral test, they were not infected at the time their sample was collected. However, this does not mean that they will not get sick. They should take preventative measures to protect themselves and their loved ones.

Viral testing is highly recommended for:

- People with severe symptoms
- Individuals who are hospitalized
- Those in high-risk situations (such as healthcare providers)
- Those with risk factors that would increase the severity of the disease (being immunocompromised, being elderly, etc).

It is important to remember that a lot of places in the world do not have the testing resources to test every person.

If someone does not have severe symptoms, they are likely able to recover at home and may not need to be tested.

## ⇒ Are there treatments for COVID-19?

**There is no cure or treatment anywhere in the world for COVID-19.**

Depending on the symptoms that someone has, it is possible to treat those symptoms and support the person through the progression of the illness. This allows their bodies to heal and their immune system to address the infection.

Scientists have begun studying different medicines to see if they will work to fight COVID-19, including medicines that are used for malaria, HIV, and other viral infections. Until now, there are no medicines that have been approved to treat COVID-19. Scientists have also started to create and test a vaccine that will be effective against COVID-19, however this can take a long time to develop. We will not likely have a vaccine for a few years.

Activities such as drinking hot water, eating lemons or onions, eating ginger, or inhaling steam and herbs are not effective treatments for COVID-19. Herbal medications might be helpful to reduce symptoms, however they are not proven effective to work for COVID-19.

### **Take Action:**

Do not take any medication that is not approved to work or has not been studied. Share the correct information about the medications that have been approved to work.