Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

1. What is a coronavirus?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. Many of them infect animals, but some coronaviruses from animals can evolve (change) into a new human coronavirus that can spread from person-to-person. This is what happened with the new coronavirus known as SARS-CoV-2, which causes the disease known as COVID-19. Diseases from coronaviruses in people typically cause mild to moderate illness, like the common cold.

2. How are coronaviruses spread?

Like other respiratory illnesses, such as influenza, human coronaviruses most commonly spread to others from an infected person who has symptoms through:

- Droplets produced through coughing and sneezing
- Close personal contact, such as caring for an infected person
- Touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes before washing your hands

3. What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Reported illnesses have ranged from people with mild symptoms to people becoming severely ill, requiring admission to the hospital, and dying.

Symptoms include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing

4. What should I do if I have these symptoms?

Evidence suggests that like the flu, most people will have mild symptoms and should stay home at least 3 days (72 hours) after recovery, which means your fever has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medications and there is improvement in your respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath), **AND** at least 7 days have passed *since your symptoms first appeared*.

Older adults, pregnant women, and those with compromised immune systems or underlying medical problems who experience these symptoms should call their doctor early. If you are having difficulty breathing or keeping fluids down, go to an emergency room or call 911, otherwise call your doctor before going in to seek care.

Key Points

- COVID-19 is spread through close personal contact or by touching an object or surface with the virus on it.
- Everyone should stay home unless you need to access essential services or are an essential worker.
- Always stay home and self-isolate from all others if you have a fever and cough or shortness of breath
- Public Health needs your help practicing social distancing to slow the spread of novel coronavirus in LA County.
- Call 211 if you have additional questions

For more Information:

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

Call 2-1-1

http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/novel-coronavirus-2019.html

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5. Can I get tested for the coronavirus?

Most people will get better with rest, so there is no need to see a doctor about testing if you have mild symptoms. If you develop difficulty breathing or cannot keep fluids down, see a doctor or, if an emergency, call 911. Certain patients such as the elderly, those that are immunocompromised or have underlying medical conditions should call their doctor earlier. If you have questions, please call the clinic or your doctor before going in.

6. How is novel coronavirus treated?

There is no specific treatment for illness caused by COVID-19. However, many of the symptoms can be treated. Treatment is based on the patient's condition.

There is currently no vaccine to prevent novel coronavirus. Be aware of scam products for sale that make false claims to prevent or treat this new infection.

7. Is the novel coronavirus spreading in the United States?

Yes, there is increasing community spread in the United States, including in Los Angeles County, and that spread is likely to continue. Our aim is to slow the spread of infection in order to protect the public and the healthcare system.

8. What can I do to protect myself and others from COVID-19?

There are steps that everyone can take daily to reduce the risk of getting sick or infecting others with COVID-19.

You should:

- Practice **s**ocial distancing in compliance with health officer orders. This means everyone should stay home unless they need to access essential services or are an essential worker. Whenever you are out, keep 6 ft. apart from everyone else as much as possible.
- **If you are an essential worker, stay home when you are sick.**
- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact, like kissing and sharing cups or utensils, with people who are sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning product.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. If you do not have a tissue, use your elbow (not your hands).
- Get a flu shot to prevent influenza if you have not done so this season.
  - Avoid all non-essential travel

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9. Should I wear a facemask?

It is not recommended that people who are well wear a mask to protect themselves from COVID-19 unless a healthcare professional advises it. A facemask should be used by people with COVID-19 who have symptoms to protect others from getting infected. Health workers and other people who are taking care of someone infected with COVID-19 in a close setting should wear a mask.

10. How can I protect myself when I travel?

At this time, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that people avoid all non-essential travel and all travel abroad. Check the CDC COVID-19 Information for Travel webpage https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html for up-to-date recommendations.

11. School and business closures

Given the evidence of community spread of COVID-19, the Los Angeles County Health Officer and the Governor of California have closed non-essential businesses where large numbers of people come into close contact, to help slow the spread of disease. These businesses include movie theaters, event arenas, bars and nightclubs, gyms, bowling alleys, arcades, playgrounds, hair and nail salons, non-essential retail stores, indoor shopping malls, and others. In addition, restaurants and other food-serving facilities are limited to delivery, pick up, or drive-thru with no on-site service.

Essential services will remain in operation, such as public transportation, grocery stores, congregate living, and healthcare facilities, but must ensure social distancing of at least six feet between people and accessible handwashing stations

Public health is encouraging organizations and schools to provide critical services if on-site operations are temporarily reduced. Speak with your children's school or daycare center to learn about their emergency operation plan and prepare ahead for possible alternate childcare arrangements. Also, speak with employers and learn about what you might be asked to do if there are closures or reduced operations at your worksite.

12. What can I do if I get stressed about COVID-19?

When you hear, read, or watch news about an outbreak of an infectious disease, it is normal to feel anxious and show signs of stress. It is important to care for your own physical and mental health. For tips on what you can do to help cope, read "Coping with Stress During Infectious Disease Outbreaks" on the Public Health website. For help, call the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Access Center 24/7 Helpline at (800) 854-7771 or call 2-1-1.

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13. What else can I do?

- Find a healthcare provider if you don't already have one.
- Update your emergency kits with food and supplies to last 14 days in case there is a need for quarantine. It is important to be prepared as you would for any other emergency.
- Always check with reliable sources for the up-to-date, accurate information about novel coronavirus.
    - Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH, County)
        - http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/
    - California Department of Public Health (CDPH, State)
        - https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/nCOV2019.aspx
    - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, National)
        - http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/novel-coronavirus-2019.html
    - World Health Organization (WHO, International)
        - https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus

If you have questions and would like to speak to someone, call 2-1-1