



FAQs About COVID-19

Prepared by the Village Incident Command & Preparedness Group

Q: Should I take my temperature everyday and what happens if my temperature is over 100.3?

A: Yes, and call a healthcare professional if you develop a fever and/or symptom of respiratory illness -- such as cough or shortness of breath -- within 14 days of travel from an affected area or within 14 days of close contact with a COVID-19 patient. Older people, people with underlying medical conditions, and people with compromised immune symptoms should contact a healthcare provider early. If you experience severe symptoms (e.g., persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion or inability to arouse, or bluish lips of face), contact a healthcare provider or emergency department and seek care immediately.

COVID-19, or coronavirus disease 2019, is respiratory disease caused by one of the seven coronaviruses known to infect humans. It was first identified in humans in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, in December 2019. The virus that causes COVID-19 is called SARS-CoV-2. **This virus is very contagious.**

Q. What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

A: Symptoms, which generally appear two to 14 days after exposure, include fever, cough, and difficulty breathing. Most people who become sick do not require hospitalization, but older adults, people with chronic health conditions, and people with compromised immune systems are more likely to get very sick and require more advanced care.

Q: Is coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Summit County?

A: Yes. The current number of cases in each county is updated daily at 2pm at coronavirus.ohio.gov. More cases of COVID-19 are likely to be identified in the coming days, including more instances of community spread. We expect that widespread transmission of COVID-19 in Ohio and Summit County may occur.

At this time, there is no vaccine to protect against COVID-19 and no medications approved to treat it. Nonpharmaceutical interventions will be the most important response strategy to try to delay the spread of the virus and reduce the impact of disease.

Q: Should I get tested for COVID-19?

A: Yes, if you have symptoms. Call your healthcare professional if you develop a fever and/or symptom of respiratory illness -- such as cough or shortness of breath -- within 14 days of travel from an affected area or within 14 days of close contact with a COVID-19 patient. Older people, people with underlying medical conditions, and people with compromised immune symptoms should contact a healthcare provider early. If you experience severe symptoms (e.g., persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion or inability to arouse, or bluish lips of face), contact a healthcare provider or emergency department and seek care immediately.

Q: Who is at risk?

A: People who recently traveled to affected geographic areas, people in close contact with people who have COVID-19, people who care for patients with COVID-19, and people in areas that have experienced community spread, including communities in Ohio, are at elevated risk.

Older adults, 65 years and older are at higher risk for severe illness, people with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma, people who are immunocompromised including cancer treatment, people of any age with severe obesity (body mass index >40) or certain underlying conditions, particularly if not well controlled, such as those with diabetes, renal failure or liver disease and pregnant women are at a higher risk since there is so much unknown about this virus. COVID-19 is very contagious.

Q: How does COVID-19 spread?

A: COVID-19 is believed to spread mainly from person-to-person; i.e. people who are in close contact (within about 6 feet) with one another and through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. This is very contagious.

It is believed that people are most contagious when they are most symptomatic/sickest. Some spread might be possible before people show symptoms, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. It also may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

Q: What can I do to prevent COVID-19?

A: There are no vaccines to prevent COVID-19. Implement the personal prevention protection methods used to prevent flu and other infectious diseases.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Social distance with others; maintain a distance of 6-feet or more.
- Clean steering wheel, gear shift, door handle and radio knobs.
- Clean credit cards and debit cards.
- Use gloves when pumping gas or immediately wash your hands after filling your tank.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue and throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean high-touch areas, everyday using household cleaning spray or wipes according to label directions: high-touch areas include: counters, tables, doorknobs, cabinet handles, light switches, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, nightstands.
- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing, going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60%alchol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

Q: How do I handle food deliveries and cardboard packages, phone handling?

A:

Phones: Keep your phone to yourself. Be very reluctant to share my own phone with anyone right now, especially if they seem unwell.

It's not clear what role children play in the transmission of this coronavirus but, just in case, children should be washing hands before they touch their parents' phones. That said, it seems more likely at present that adults give it to children than the other way around.

Ideally, you should be cleaning your phones, tablets and keyboards with alcohol wipes (which need to be around 70% alcohol). They are quite effective at deactivating viruses (if somewhat hard to get now). Most baby wipes only have a low percentage of alcohol so are less effective but just the wiping would help remove virus particles. In the worst-case scenario, you can try using a damp cloth with a small amount of soap and water to clean your phone. **Don't let water get inside your phone.**

Daily Mail: The USPS is a vital public service that is part of the country's critical infrastructure as they deliver much needed medications and Social Security checks. The World Health Organization and the CDC have stated "the likelihood of an infected person contaminating commercial goods is low and the risk of catching the virus is low," and "because of the poor survivability of these COVID-19 viruses on surfaces, there is likely very low risk of spread from products or packaging that are shipped over a period of days or weeks at ambient temperatures. The USPS has implemented a standard hygiene procedure to reduce the workplace risk of exposure per the CDC guidelines. **Washing your hands after handling your mail is always advisable.**

Packages: When it comes to mail and package deliveries, try to keep distance from the delivery person. Many delivery people are already forgoing the customary signature on the tablet, meaning you don't have to touch a device or e-stylus that many others have already handled. It is advisable to wipe down a package before opening it, and **washing your hands well after disposing of the packaging.**

At the end of the day, the risk is never zero, and the world is a nightmare if you go too far down this route of worrying about every single surface.

Food Deliveries: As a general rule, stick with restaurants you know and like. If you've ever gotten sick at a place before, or didn't feel comfortable in the dining room, there's no need to push it when it comes to delivery. Order directly from the restaurant when possible. If you need to pick up your food, practice social distancing by standing at least 6-feet away from others and wear disposable gloves when picking up your order.

When your order arrives, have the delivery person "place the order outside your door and then disinfect the area." Avoid tipping with cash (as virus-causing germs can linger on paper), and opt for tipping through the app.

Before you start eating, examine the individual containers thoroughly to make sure nothing appears as if it's been opened or tampered with. You may also wipe down packaging with a sanitizing wipe. Unpack your food and place in your own containers. After unpacking your food and handling the packaging, **wash your hands thoroughly** before digging in.

Q: How can I handle the stress and cope with the pandemic?

A: Fear and anxiety about COVID-19 can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions. Here are few things you can do to support yourself:

- Take breaks from watching, reading or listening to news stories and social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.
- Take care of your body. Take deep breaths, stretch, or medicate. Try to eat healthy, well-balance meals, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep and avoid alcohol and drugs.
- Make time to unwind. Try to do some other activities you enjoy.
- Take time to go outside and enjoy the sunshine.
- Work on a project that you never had time to do.
- Start a hobby that you never had time to do; learn a language, woodworking, DIY project or craft.
- Help America to win the war on COVID-19 by contacting local organizations to see if you can provide assistance.
- Connect with others. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.

- Call your healthcare provider if stress gets in the way of your daily activities for several days in a row.
- If you, or someone you care about, are feeling overwhelmed with emotions like sadness, depression, or anxiety, or feel like you want to harm yourself or others, call 911.

Q: Is it safe to pet my dog or cat?

A: According to the American Veterinary Medical Association, petting a dog's fur is a low risk. The AVMA's Chief Veterinary Officer Gail Golab says, "We're not overly concerned about people contracting COVID-19 through contact with dogs and cats." And there's science behind that: "The virus survives best on smooth surfaces, such as countertops and doorknobs," Golab says. "Porous materials, such as pet fur, tend to absorb and trap pathogens, making it harder to contract them through touch."

Dr. Jerry Klein, Chief Veterinary Officer for the AKC, says, "The CDC has not reported any cases of pets or other animals becoming infected with COVID-19 in the United States or anywhere else in the world, including hotbeds like Italy." Dr. Klein urges common sense best practices when it comes to our pets: "If you have children, you wouldn't have them touch a puppy and put their fingers in their mouth, because they can have fecal contamination," he says. "The general practice of washing our hands after touching a puppy or a dog—that's normal hygiene."

For now, healthy pet owners in the U.S. don't need to do anything other than follow basic hygienic precautions such as washing their hands with soap and water before and after contact with any animal, including dogs and cats. If you test positive for COVID-19 or have been exposed to the novel coronavirus, experts recommend that you should "restrict contact with [your] animals — both to avoid exposing the pets and to prevent getting the virus on their skin or fur, which might be passed on to another person who touches the animal." To reduce the spread of all germs, you may consider wiping your pet's paws when they come in and out of the house with a paw cleaner and paw wipes.

Dogs do not need a face mask to protect themselves against the novel coronavirus COVID-19. If you are still concerned or notice a change in your dog's health, speak to a veterinarian.

And the most important protection of all: ***Under no circumstances should owners abandon their dogs, cats, or other pets because of COVID-19 fears.***

Q: Should I wear a face mask?

A: The use of face masks by people who are not sick is not recommended to protect against respiratory diseases. Due to expected shortages, face masks should be reserved for people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent spread of the disease and by healthcare workers and others taking care of someone in a close setting.

Q: Can I make my own cleaning solution?

A: Yes. In addition to store-bought disinfectant products, you can make your own cleaning solution at home by combining water and bleach in a 10:1 ratio. For example, combining 1 cup of bleach with 10 cups of water will produce an effective disinfectant cleaner.

Q: Why is Ohio doing things like closing schools, restaurants and bars, suspending visits in nursing homes, banning large gatherings, asking businesses to have employees work from home, and asking people to limit contact with others?

A: Preventing the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 and preventing deaths means preventing exposure to as many people as possible. While most people who contract COVID-19 will recover, they can pass the disease on to two or three other people, meaning the infection will eventually reach people unable to fight it. If everyone takes precautions, we can prevent this from happening as much as possible.

Q: Can you contract the coronavirus disease by touching a surface?

A: People could catch COVID-19 by touching contaminated surfaces or objects and then touching their eyes, nose or mouth.

Q: Should I have contact with my pet if I have the coronavirus disease?

A: When possible, have another member of your household care for your animals while you are sick. If you are sick with COVID-19, avoid contact with your pet, including petting, snuggling, being kissed or licked, and sharing food. If you must care for your pet or be around animals while you are sick, wash your hands before and after you interact with pets and wear a facemask.

Q: Is it safe to travel internationally?

A: The federal government is advising **against** travel to certain countries due to COVID-19. For the latest updates, visit the U.S. Department of State and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention travel advisory pages.

Q: What should I do if I had contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19?

A: Detailed information for people who have had close contact with a person confirmed to have, or being evaluated for, COVID-19 are available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Q: Will warm weather stop the outbreak of COVID-19?

A: It is not yet known whether weather and temperature impact the spread of COVID-19. Some other viruses, like the common cold and flu, spread more during cold weather months, but that does not mean it is impossible to become sick with these viruses during other months. At this time, it is not known whether the spread of COVID-19 will decrease when weather becomes warmer.

For additional information:

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq
www.scph.org/covid-19