Tarrant County Public Health

A healthier community through leadership in health strategy

Facts About COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

What is coronavirus or COVID-19?
COVID-19 is a new respiratory illness that was first discovered in Wuhan, China. It is transmitted from person to person.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?
Symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, fatigue. In severe cases they include persistent high fever, shortness of breath and pneumonia.

Who is most at risk of becoming seriously ill?
People over age 60 and people with pre-existing conditions such as diabetes, cancer and heart disease.

How is it transmitted?
• Through close contact with an infected person
• By an infected person coughing or sneezing
• By touching contaminated objects or surfaces and then touching your mouth, nose or eyes
It takes from two days up to 14 days from being exposed to the virus before you will get sick.

What can I do to prevent getting COVID-19?
You can only get coronavirus from someone who is sick or by touching an object that a sick person has contaminated. The best things to do:
• Wash your hands frequently with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer.
• Avoid shaking hands, wave hello instead.
• Clean and disinfect surfaces that people touch frequently with a cleaner that is effective against coronavirus.
• Avoid touching your mouth and face.

What should I do if I get sick?
• Stay home until your fever has been gone for at least 24 hours unless you experience significant symptoms, then contact your medical provider before you seek care.
• Limit your contact with others in your household if possible. If possible limit the number of people who provide you care within your home, so you don't expose them.
• Most cases of coronavirus will be mild, and you will recover without medical care. If you have persistent fever, high fever, have underlying medical conditions contact your medical care provider.
• If you have symptoms of coronavirus contact your medical provider before seeking care. If you don't notify them before arriving at the clinic or hospital immediately grab a mask and let the intake staff know your concern so that you don't potentially expose others while waiting to be seen.

How do I get tested for coronavirus?
If a person has respiratory issues and a fever, contact a physician or an urgent care or other medical facility and get tested for the flu or other viral illnesses first. If your doctor or medical professional determines that, based on your symptoms and travel history that a COVID-19 test is needed, specimens will be taken and sent to a lab for testing. TCPH does not test individuals for COVID-19 unless you are a contact case and have been contacted by our epidemiology staff.

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How is coronavirus treated?
There is currently no known treatment/cure for coronavirus. Several medications are currently being investigated. Treatment for complications of COVID-19 such as bacterial pneumonia, fever reducers and cough suppressants may be used.

If I am planning to travel should I go?
Check the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website for updates on where travel should be avoided regardless of your risk for complications from coronavirus infection. If you are high risk, you are advised not to travel.

If I am planning a large event, should I cancel it?
If people are coming from out of state or include large number of high risk individuals canceling the event should be considered. For other events, even planners should consider if the event is required, can it be done virtually. Cancelling events is not required but event planners should consider if it is worth the risk.

What are containment measures or nonpharmaceutical interventions (NPIs)?
Containment measures are activities to slow the spread of disease. They can be done on the individual level such as asking a person to voluntarily stay home when they have been exposed to a disease or requiring ill persons to stay home or they can be applied to communities. When community containment measures are used, the goal is to stop or slow an outbreak and help prevent the medical system from being overwhelmed. In coronavirus response two containment measures may be implemented:

School closures and dismissals
These include temporary closures and dismissals of child care facilities, K–12 schools, and institutions of higher education. Though children have not been shown to be at high risk from complications from coronavirus, past respiratory outbreaks have shown children play a pivotal role in spreading the virus within the community.

Social distancing measures
This means keeping a distance of six feet between you and others whenever possible. This has proven in previous pandemics to limit the spread of a disease. This also means staying away from group settings and avoiding crowds and gatherings.

It is not realistic to think these techniques are going to stop all disease. However, they are meant to slow the rate of new infections to a point where the healthcare system can respond and provide time for a vaccine to be produced.

For more information, call 817-321-4700 or visit
http://health.tarrantcounty.com

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