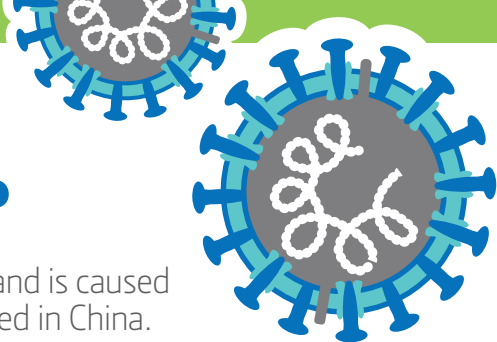# What is the coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19)?

COVID-19 is a respiratory disease that can be spread from person to person and is caused by a Coronavirus that is a family of SARS and MERS that was recently identified in China.

How is COVID-19 spread?

Although all forms of transmission of COVID19 are still unknown, one recognized form of transmission is through droplets from the nose or mouth that leave when an infected person coughs or sneeze.

Who can be infected by COVID-19?

Anyone can be infected with COVID-19. The most susceptibles are people over 60 years with chronic or cardiovascular disease conditions.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

The most common symptoms are **fever**, **dry cough** and **shortness of breath**. Although **80%** of the cases are mild, symptoms can progress from mild to severe and could cause pneumonia, kidney failure and can lead to death.

What can I do to prevent getting sick?

1. Best to wash your hands frequently with water & soap, for at least **20 seconds** under running water and dry your hands (like singing happy birthday twice). In the absence of water & soap use a **65%** or above alcohol-based solution.

2. When coughing and sneezing, **cover your mouth and nose with your elbow or paper**, throw away the paper immediately and wash your hands.

3. Keep a distance of **at least three (3) feet** and anyone who is coughing or sneezing. When someone coughs or sneezes, droplets of liquid are sprayed through the nose or mouth that may contain the virus. If you are too close, you can breathe the COVID-19 droplets.

4. **Avoid** touching your **eyes**, **nose** and **mouth** unless you have washed your hands.

5. If you have a **fever**, **cough** and **shortness of breath**, seek immediate medical attention. Let your doctor know your medical and travel history and if you were in close contact with anyone that traveled or was recently ill.

Should I use a mask?

People who do not show respiratory symptoms do not need to wear a medical mask.

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend the use of masks for people who have symptoms and for those who care for people infected with the COVID-19.

Is there any vaccine?

There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. Prevention is the best defense. If you have not been vaccinated against influenza, this is the time to do it.

Is there a treatment?

At present, there is no antiviral treatment for COVID-19. However, the illness can be treated with cough and cold medications.

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