



PATIENT FAQs

Here are a few commonly asked questions along with their answers. Should you have other questions, you can find more information at [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

What is the source of the virus?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. Some cause illness in people, and others, such as canine and feline coronaviruses, only infect animals. Rarely, animal coronaviruses that infect animals have emerged to infect people and can spread between people. This is suspected to have occurred for the virus that causes COVID-19. Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) are two other examples of coronaviruses that originated from animals and then spread to people.

How does the virus spread?

This virus was first detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China. The first infections were linked to a live animal market, but the virus is now spreading from person-to-person. It's important to note that person-to-person spread can happen on a continuum. Some viruses are highly contagious (like measles), while other viruses are less so.

The virus that causes COVID-19 seems to be spreading easily and sustainably in the community ("community spread") in some affected geographic areas. Community spread means people have been infected with the virus in an area, including some who are not sure how or where they became infected.

What precautions are you taking to ensure hospitalized coronavirus patients won't spread the illness to others in your facility?

Because COVID-19 is spread from person-to-person, we isolate those who may have been exposed. Our co-workers use personal protective equipment when caring for those patients, like special masks, gowns and eye protection, that not only protect them but also stop the spread.

Our facilities are routinely disinfected. We regularly care for patients who are ill with complications from other respiratory viruses like the flu. We hope you understand that this is the work we do every day, and we take it very seriously.

What are the symptoms?

People with COVID-19 don't have a runny nose or nasal congestion. 90% of patients will have fever and 70% will have a dry cough. Those who become acutely ill will experience shortness of breath.

What do I do if I start feeling ill?

If you're just mildly ill, stay home and contact your health care provider by phone or call the Chickasaw Nation Department of Health Coronavirus Call Center at 580-272-1312 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. If you have difficulty breathing, call ahead to your nearest emergency room and let them know your symptoms and that you're on your way. That will help them prepare for your arrival.

Can someone who has been quarantined spread the virus to others?

Quarantine means separating a person or group of people who have been exposed to a contagious disease but have not developed illness (symptoms) from others who have not been exposed, in order to prevent the possible spread of that disease. Quarantine is usually established for the incubation period of the communicable disease, which is the span of time during which people have developed illness after exposure. For COVID-19, the period of quarantine is 14 days from the last date of exposure, because 14 days is the longest incubation period seen for similar coronaviruses. Someone who has been released from COVID-19 quarantine is not considered a risk for spreading the virus to others because they have not developed illness during the incubation period.

What is the risk of my child becoming sick with COVID-19?

Based on available evidence, children do not appear to be at higher risk for COVID-19 than adults. While some children and infants have been sick with COVID-19, adults make up most of the known cases to date.

Can the Coronavirus be spread through food?

Coronaviruses are generally thought to be spread from person-to-person through respiratory droplets. Currently there is no evidence to support transmission of COVID-19 associated with food.

It 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 possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

In general, because of poor survivability of these coronaviruses on surfaces, there is likely very low risk of spread from food products or packaging that are shipped over a period of days or weeks at ambient, refrigerated, or frozen temperatures.

