

COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

This document is intended to accompany the COVID-19 fact sheet provided on the Columbus Public Health COVID-19 web page (www.columbus.gov/coronavirus). If you cannot find the information you're looking for in this document or the fact sheet, please call 614-645-1519.

For more information about the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19), please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/. For the most recent updates on COVID-19 in Ohio, please visit the Ohio Department of Health at <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/>.

For more COVID-19 resources from Columbus Public Health, please visit www.columbus.gov/coronavirus.

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 (coronavirus disease 2019) is a respiratory illness caused by a novel (new) coronavirus that can spread from person to person.

Am I at risk for COVID-19 in Columbus?

There have been confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Columbus and Franklin County. The situation is rapidly evolving and the [risk](#) may change daily. The latest updates are available from the [Ohio Department of Health](#) and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

What are the signs and symptoms of COVID-19?

Reported illnesses have ranged from people with mild symptoms to people becoming severely ill.

The most common signs and symptoms are:

- Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or greater
- Cough (usually dry and unproductive)
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Chills
- Muscle pain/aches
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

If someone is showing any of these signs, **seek emergency medical care immediately:**

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

Who is at risk for developing severe illness?

- People aged 65 years and older
- People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility
- People with high-risk conditions such as:
 - Chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
 - Serious heart conditions

- Being immunocompromised (Many conditions can cause a person to be immunocompromised, including cancer treatment, smoking, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune-weakening medications.)
- Severe obesity

How can I get tested?

Free COVID-19 testing is being offered at multiple community testing sites throughout Columbus. You do not need to have symptoms to receive a test at one of the community testing sites. To find a testing site closest to you, visit www.columbus.gov/coronavirus or call 614-645-1519.

What should I do if I think I've been exposed to COVID-19?

If you're currently having symptoms and would like to talk to someone, you can call the Infectious Disease Investigation team at Columbus Public Health at 614-645-1519.

How is COVID-19 transmitted?

The virus that causes COVID-19 is mainly transmitted through droplets generated when an infected person coughs, sneezes or speaks. You can be infected by touching a contaminated surface and then touching your eyes, nose or mouth before washing your hands.

Why should I wear a face covering?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recommended that Americans wear cloth face coverings (masks) in public to help slow the spread of COVID-19. This recommendation is being made based on studies that show a significant proportion of people with COVID-19 lack symptoms and can transmit the virus to others in close proximity, through speaking, coughing, sneezing or other means.

What else should I know about face coverings and COVID-19?

- Use coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain, such as grocery stores, pharmacies, and public parks.
- Maintain 6-foot social distancing whenever possible, even if you are wearing a face covering.
- **DO NOT place** cloth face coverings on children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.
- [Make cloth face coverings](#) from household items or common materials. Use multiple layers of a fabric that does not damage or lose shape when laundered or machine dried.
- DO use coverings that fit snugly but comfortably and allow for breathing without restriction. Secure behind the head with ties or ear loops. Wear horizontally.
- DO NOT touch the mask while wearing it. If you do, wash your hands immediately.
- DO ensure that your nose, mouth, and chin are covered at all times.
- DO NOT allow the mask to slip under your nose and DO NOT untie straps/unhook ear loops.
- DO wash your hands before putting on and immediately after removing.
- DO NOT touch your eyes, nose, or mouth when removing the face covering.
- DO launder coverings after each use.
- DO NOT wear when wet from laundering or from spit or mucus.

How should I clean surfaces in my house?

Routinely clean frequently touched surfaces (for example: tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks and electronics (see below for special electronics cleaning and disinfection instructions) with household cleaners and EPA-registered disinfectants. Visit the following website for further information about proper cleaning and disinfecting: surfaces: [EPA & CDC Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting](#)

Can I donate blood or plasma?

Healthy individuals can still donate in areas that have issued shelter-in-place declarations. Please contact the American Red Cross at 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit their website at <https://www.redcrossblood.org/> to obtain additional information.

Who can I contact if I'm a tenant concerned about being evicted?

Please call the Columbus City Attorney's office at 614-645-5650 for questions regarding your rights as a tenant during the COVID-19 pandemic.

I am a tenant who has tested positive with COVID-19 and will soon be evicted, is there a place for me to go?

Please call our housing assistance hotline at 1-614-274-7000 to get directly into an isolation shelter to avoid exposing others.

How do I report a complaint pertaining to COVID-19?

Contact the City of Columbus 311 Service Center by phone or email:

- Phone: (614) 645-3111 (Mon-Fri: 7 a.m.-6 p.m.)
- Email: https://311.columbus.gov/Question_comment.aspx