

COVID-19 Safety

How SARS-CoV-2 Spreads

According to the United States Center for Disease Control (CDC), SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19 spreads most commonly through person-to-person contact (within about 6 feet), primarily through inhalation of respiratory particles (droplets and aerosols) produced when an infected person exhales, talks, sings, shouts, coughs, or sneezes. Less commonly, it is spread through airborne transmission over longer distances when smaller droplets and particles linger in air, particularly in enclosed spaces with inadequate ventilation.

Another less common way that the virus spreads is when someone touches a contaminated surface, and then touches their nose, mouth, or eyes. Current evidence suggests that novel coronavirus may remain viable for hours to days on a variety of surfaces. Frequent cleaning of visibly dirty and high-touch surfaces, followed by disinfection, can help prevent SARS-CoV-2 and other respiratory pathogens (germs) from spreading in workplaces. Although touching contaminated surfaces or objects is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads, CDC is still learning more about various pathways of transmission.

Know the Symptoms

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness.

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. Anyone can have mild to severe symptoms. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever or chills
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Muscle or body aches
- New loss of taste or smell
- Congestion or runny nose
- Cough
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Nausea or vomiting and/or diarrhea

Risk Factors for COVID-19 Transmission

- Displaying Symptoms of COVID-19 (see above)
- Fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit (F) or higher or report feeling feverish
- Diagnosis of SARS-CoV-2 infection in the prior 10 days
- Close contact to someone with SARS-CoV-2 infection during the prior 14 days

Protect Your Health

- Frequently wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. When soap and running water are not immediately available, use an alcohol-based hand [sanitizer](#) with at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol as active ingredients and rub hands together until they are dry. Always wash hands that are visibly soiled.
- Use of a face mask or respirator may be implemented as either a workplace policy or if an individual employee makes a personal decision to wear them.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Practice good respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes or coughing/sneezing into your elbow/upper sleeve.
- Avoid [close contact](#) (within 6 feet for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period) with people who are visibly sick and practice physical distancing with coworkers and the public.
- Stay home if sick.
- Recognize personal risk factors. [According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), certain people, including [older adults](#) and those with [underlying conditions](#) such as heart or lung disease, chronic kidney disease requiring dialysis, liver disease, diabetes, immune deficiencies, or obesity, are at higher risk for developing more serious complications from COVID-19.
- Take your temperature if you feel sick or febrile. A temperature greater than 100.4 F should be reported to your supervisor.

COVID-19 SAFETY QUESTIONS

What are risk factors in the workplace that contribute to the transmission of SARS-CoV-2?

What are common signs and symptoms of COVID-19?

What is our workplace policy on the prevention and response to COVID-19 exposures and infections in our workplace?

What is the procedure to get tested if a suspected workplace exposure occurs?

Does staff know who to go to with issues or questions regarding COVID-19 workplace safety?

ADDITIONAL TRAINING RESOURCES

[United States Center for Disease Control COVID-19 Resources page](#)

[OSHA COVID-19 Control and Prevention](#)

[Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Guidance and Resources](#)