



TOOLBOX TALK: COVID-19 INFORMATION AND OVERVIEW

What is a Coronavirus?

Coronaviruses are a family of viruses that can cause respiratory illness in people. Coronaviruses circulate among animals, including camels, cattle, cats, and bats.

How is the Novel Coronavirus, COVID-19 Different from Other Coronaviruses?

Just like there are different types of related viruses that cause smallpox, chickenpox, and monkeypox, different coronaviruses cause different diseases in people. The Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) coronavirus causes SARS and the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) coronavirus causes MERS. The novel coronavirus, COVID-19 is one of seven types of known human coronaviruses. COVID-19, like the MERS and SARS coronaviruses, likely evolved from a virus previously found in animals. The remaining known coronaviruses cause a significant percentage of colds in adults and children, and these are not a serious threat for otherwise healthy adults.

What are the Signs and Symptoms of COVID-19 infection?

Patients with confirmed COVID-19 infection have reportedly had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms such as fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

What Should I Do if I Think I Have Been Exposed to or Infected with COVID-19?

Alert your healthcare provider immediately if you think you may be infected with COVID-19, including if you have been exposed to someone with the virus and have signs/symptoms of infection. If you are experiencing symptoms, you should tell your healthcare provider about any recent travel to areas where COVID-19 is spreading. If you believe you have been exposed, alert your Supervisor, Safety Manager, or any Management Team Member immediately. Please don't come to work if you believe you are sick.

How is COVID-19 Diagnosed?

Your healthcare provider can determine if your signs and symptoms are explained by other causes, or if there is reason to suspect you may have COVID-19. If laboratory testing is appropriate, your healthcare provider will work with health officials in your state, who in turn will work with CDC, to collect and test any clinical specimens for diagnosis.

How is COVID-19 Treated?

No vaccine or specific treatment for COVID-19 infection is available. Hospitals can provide supportive care for infected people.

*The above information is from The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. The following is from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person:

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

Older adults and people who have severe underlying chronic medical conditions like heart or lung disease or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing more serious complications from COVID-19 illness. Please consult with your health care provider about additional steps you may be able to take to protect yourself.

TAKE STEPS TO PROTECT YOURSELF

Clean Your Hands Often

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Avoid Close Contact

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Put distance between yourself and other people if COVID-19 is spreading in your community. This is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.

Take Steps to Protect Others

- Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care.

Cover Coughs and Sneezes

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
- Throw used tissues in the trash.
- Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Wear a Facemask If You Are Sick

- **If you are sick:** You should wear a facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) and before you enter a healthcare provider's office. If you are not able to wear a facemask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then you should do your best to cover your coughs and sneezes, and people who are caring for you should wear a facemask if they enter your room.
- **If you are NOT sick:** You do not need to wear a facemask unless you are caring for someone who is sick (and they are not able to wear a facemask). Facemasks may be in short supply and they should be saved for caregivers.

When Feasible:

Clean and Disinfect

- Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
- If surfaces are dirty, clean them: Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- **To disinfect:** Most common EPA-registered household disinfectants will work. Use disinfectants appropriate for the surface.

Disinfectant Options Include:

- **Diluting Your Household Bleach.** To make a bleach solution, mix:
 - 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water
OR
 - 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water
 - Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted.
- **Alcohol Solutions.**
 - Ensure solution has at least 70% alcohol.
- **Other Common EPA-Registered Household Disinfectants.**
 - Products with EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens claims are expected to be effective against COVID-19 based on data for harder to kill viruses. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, etc.).