

Frequently Asked Questions

COVID-19 Basics

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus. Coronaviruses are a family of viruses that affect animals and human beings. There are hundreds of different coronaviruses and COVID-19 is one of those.

COVID-19 stands for: CO – corona, VI – virus, D – Disease, 19 – 2019 or the year in which it was discovered.

March 17, 2020—History & Symptoms

What is the difference between an epidemic and a pandemic?

An epidemic is local spread of an infectious disease. A pandemic where the disease will move globally with maintained, sustained transmission.

March 12, 2020—Update (1:27)

What can we learn from China's timeline with this virus?

China's results are largely positive. It appears that their efforts to flatten the curve have been successful.

March 16, 2020—Update

Do we expect to see multiple outbreaks of COVID-19?

We don't really know what will happen next with COVID-19, but we can look to past pandemics to make educated assumptions. With past pandemics, we have seen multiple outbreaks of the virus throughout the year and we are expecting similar results with this pandemic.

March 16, 2020—Update

Will the prevalence of COVID-19 naturally dissipate when the weather gets warmer?

We do not know yet.

March 16, 2020—Update

What do we know about children and COVID-19?

We know that children can become infected and transmit the virus, but the vast majority of them have mild disease.

March 16, 2020—Update

What makes COVID-19 different from other coronaviruses?

COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus, which means that this particular virus has never before been seen by human beings. We are all susceptible to it and we are learning as we go.

March 17, 2020—History & Symptoms

Who is most at risk for COVID-19?

Those most at risk for COVID-19 are people over 60 and those who have health conditions that make COVID-19 more complicated, such as chronic respiratory diseases, diabetes, compromised immunity, etc.

[March 17, 2020—History & Symptoms](#)

When will life go back to normal?

Truthfully, we do not know. We would anticipate that this virus will be infecting large numbers of people for the next year. Our hope is that this happens over a longer period of time rather than a short period of time so we do not overwhelm our healthcare systems.

[March 17, 2020—History & Symptoms](#)

How infectious is COVID-19?

Data is changing rapidly on what we know about the infectivity of COVID-19, so we cannot answer that question definitively at this time. However, our current understanding is that a person who is infected spreads the virus to more than one person.

[March 18, 2020—Social Distancing & Coping](#)

What kind of emotional reactions do we expect during an infectious disease outbreak?

Anxiety is very common during outbreaks.

[March 18, 2020—Social Distancing & Coping](#)

As a parent, how can I support the emotional needs or anxieties of my children at this time?

Recognize it. Talk to each other about it. Be patient with each other. People respond to stressful situations differently. Don't fore

[March 18, 2020—Social Distancing & Coping](#)

What can I do to decrease my feelings of anxiety and stress right now?

Unplug. Put your phone down, turn off the TV and computer, and connect with others. Exercise, even if it's something as simple as going for a walk. Do something that you love.

[March 18, 2020—Social Distancing & Coping](#)

If I'm young and healthy do I need to worry about COVID-19?

Yes. Reports from the CDC and Europe are showing that a large percentage (almost half) of the positive cases are people under 50. There are people in their 20s and 30s who are in ICU beds. Please take this seriously.

[March 19, 2020—Update](#)

If I'm pregnant, am I at higher risk? What about my baby?

We don't know the answer for COVID-19 at this time. However, we can apply what we know about other coronaviruses. We know that those viruses are problematic for pregnant women and that they cause more morbidity and mortality—meaning they get sicker and die more frequently—than the general population. Based on that, we recommend that pregnant women remain extremely vigilant about keeping the virus out of their homes, limiting contacts and social distancing.

[March 19, 2020—Update](#)

Can people be infected with COVID-19 twice?

We do not know if you can be infected with and get sick from COVID-19 more than once. Early research suggests some immunity against the virus, but we do not know how long that immunity might last.

[March 20, 2020—Update](#)

Who is at the highest risk for severe cases of COVID-19 and what preexisting health concerns come into play?

The older a person is the more at risk they are for severe COVID-19 symptoms. Preexisting conditions to watch out for are chronic lung diseases, such as asthma, COPD, emphysema; chronic cardiac conditions; diabetes; and compromised immunity states.

[March 20, 2020—Update](#)

Are doTERRA employees practicing social distancing?

You bet we are! We've gone to great efforts to decrease our campus footprint. Most of our employees, including the Member Services team, have been working from home. We were very progressive in our efforts, even before local governments issued recommendations.

[March 20, 2020—Update](#)

Does ibuprofen makes COVID-19 worse?

No. There were some reports about NSAIDs, like ibuprofen, making people more susceptible to the disease or making symptoms worse. That was based on an article and a Tweet that spawned a lot of discussion on the topic. Since that time, the WHO, CDC, and scientists across the world have essentially debunked this. We do not feel that there is strong medical evidence suggesting any risk with these kinds of drugs.

[March 23, 2020—Update](#)

Isn't there increased mental and emotional risk in social distancing?

In order to stop the spread of COVID-19, we need physical distance, but that doesn't mean that we need to stop connecting with each other. Find creative ways to connect, uplift, and support the people you love.

[March 23, 2020—Update](#)

There are a lot of alleged treatments or cures for COVID-19, what is Dr. Osguthorpe's take?

If there were things that we knew, based on reliable scientific and medical evidence, that worked to treat or cure COVID-19, we would share them with you. We don't have data on anything other than the things we've been hearing over and over again—social distancing, washing your hands, covering your coughs, etc. Look to the CDC and the WHO and they will detail the best recommendations available.

[March 26, 2020—Update](#)

If someone tests positive for COVID-19, what is the likelihood that they will need in-patient care?

We are learning more and more as the outbreak develops in various countries, but we do not have a definitive answer. What we do know is that age and underlying health conditions, like chronic lung disease, diabetes, chronic heart disease, and compromised immunity all increase the risk of hospitalization.

[March 27, 2020—FAQs](#)

How long does immunity to COVID-19 last for those who've had the disease and recovered?

Many people, the vast majority, are recovering from COVID-19. So, we know that our immune systems respond to and control the virus. What we don't know is how long that immunity lasts. That data will come in time.

[March 27, 2020—FAQs](#)

What is the R_0 , or infectivity, of COVID-19?

We only have enough data right now to make an educated guess on the R_0 of COVID-19. Based on that data, we believe that the R_0 of COVID-19 is between two and three. The R_0 is not confirmed positives; rather it is the number of infections theoretically related to the disease.

[March 30, 2020—Update](#)

What positives can we learn from other countries?

Looking at the data out of China it seems that their public health measures and public compliance were extremely successful at decreasing the spread of the virus.

[March 30, 2020—Update](#)

If we are all going to get COVID-19 anyways, why not get it now and get it over with?

We want to flatten the curve in order to give our hospitals the chance to care for those who need care. If we all got it at once we, our hospitals would be overwhelmed. People who could normally be saved would end up dying because of a lack of ventilators and hospital beds.

[March 27, 2020—FAQs](#)

Are there two strains of COVID-19?

There might be some confusion between SARS-CoV-1 and SARS-CoV-2. SARS-CoV-1 was the virus that circulated in 2003, causing the SARS epidemic. SARS-CoV-2 is the same thing as COVID-19. These are two different viruses, both of which are coronaviruses, both of which cause severe acute respiratory syndrome. However, they are two different viruses with different tests.

[April 1, 2020—FAQs](#)

Why doesn't the United States have enough tests and medical supplies to handle this outbreak?

This is a complex question. It's due to a series of cascading failures at every level—from individual all the way up to the government. After the SARS epidemic in 2003, some countries made changes to prepare themselves for an event such as this one. The United States on the other hand, didn't do a very good job at preparing for the future, which is making it difficult for us to respond appropriately. We find ourselves having to play catch-up, which we're doing very well. After this has past, we will have the opportunity to prepare for the next pandemic so that we can be more prepared than we are now.

[April 1, 2020—FAQs](#)

How It Spreads

How does COVID-19 spread?

COVID-19 is spread person-to-person. It is thought to spread by close contact through droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks.

March 17, 2020—History & Symptoms

This virus is spread person-to-person, primarily through droplets. We can limit the spread of the virus by social distancing.

March 13, 2020—Update

Can infected people without symptoms spread the virus?

There have been some reports of people spreading the virus before they are symptomatic. We need more data to truly understand this. However, due to the effectiveness of social distancing measures in countries like China, we can postulate that people are most contagious when they are most symptomatic.

March 16, 2020—Update

Can someone spread the virus without being sick or showing symptoms?

We've learned in the last few weeks that even before a person has symptoms, they can spread COVID-19. Viral transmission is high one to two days before symptoms start.

March 26, 2020—Update

There have been reports of documented transmission by people who are asymptomatic. However, the vast majority of transmission occurs person-to-person when an infected individual is showing symptoms.

March 17, 2020—History & Symptoms

Is there evidence that COVID-19 can be spread from infected surfaces?

Yes. Research is currently being conducted to determine how long COVID-19 can survive on various surfaces. Initial findings suggest it can survive up to four hours on copper, up to 24 hours on cardboard, and up to two to three days on plastic and stainless steel. However, this research is ongoing. What we know now is that COVID-19 can remain on a surface for some period of time, be picked up by our hands and transferred to our own bodies when we touch our mouth, nose, or eyes. This is why it is important to follow recommendations for cleaning frequently touched surfaces and objects every day.

March 24, 2020—FAQs

Is COVID-19 airborne?

Right now, what we know for COVID-19 is that it is droplet spread. What that means is that droplets that are coughed or sneezed travel through the air about 3 to 6 feet. We do not believe that this is an airborne virus.

[March 24, 2020—FAQs](#)

Is it possible for COVID-19 to transfer from clothing, hair, skin, or even our pet's fur?

COVID-19 has been found on many surfaces. Research suggests that you can pick up COVID-19 off various surfaces many hours after it has been deposited. So, the short answer is yes.

[March 31, 2020—FAQs](#)

How to Protect Yourself

Should I be wearing a mask?

Yes. Current CDC recommendations suggest that wearing a mask is appropriate when leaving our homes for essential activities. Simple cloth masks or surgical masks are appropriate for these activities. N95 masks are not needed for the general population and should be reserved for the healthcare community where aerosolizing procedures are performed commonly on people with COVID-19 putting our front-line healthcare workers at significant risk.

Are there any treatments or cures for COVID-19?

We do not currently have any treatments or cures for COVID-19.

March 17, 2020—History & Symptoms

Are there home remedies that can cure or prevent the virus?

No. We do not have any proven cures or preventions yet.

March 16, 2020—Update

What should I do if a member of my family or household tests positive for COVID-19?

Limit contact with the rest of the community as much as possible. While at home, be very mindful of handwashing and avoiding secretions. If possible, isolate the sick individual from other members of the household if at all possible.

March 18, 2020—Social Distancing & Coping

Is it safe to order and eat takeout food?

The risk of contracting COVID-19 from takeout food is considered low at this time.

March 24, 2020—FAQs

If someone works in the ER, or has an essential job that requires them to be around a lot of people, is it safe for them to be around their family? What precautions can they take?

Not every social exposure is equal when it comes to COVID-19 risk. However, there are things everyone can do to help mitigate risk. Dr. Osguthorpe comes home from the hospital, removes the clothes he was wearing, showers, and then greets his family.

March 26, 2020—Update

If smoking and vaping are making us more vulnerable to respiratory diseases, why aren't we talking more about the need to stop these habits?

In the medical community, we've been talking about the harmful effects of smoking and vaping for many decades. Anything that harms or irritates your lungs, like smoking or vaping, can cause chronic lung disease and make an individual more susceptible to COVID-19.

March 27, 2020—FAQs

Should we be wearing gloves?

There are times when gloves might be recommended, such as caring for a family member who has tested positive. However, proper protocols should be followed ([see the CDC for more information](#)). Gloves can give a false sense of security. We can still transfer COVID-19 from gloves to our eyes, nose, and mouth.

[March 31, 2020—FAQs](#)

Why does everyone talk about handwashing so much?

We know that our surfaces can be contaminated with COVID-19. So, if we frequently wash our hands appropriately, we can remove COVID-19 from our hands and decrease the likelihood that we get infected.

[March 31, 2020—FAQs](#)

Do masks work to limit the transmission of COVID-19?

Yes. Masks decrease transmission from those who are sick and also can protect the uninfected from getting sick. Recently, the United States recommended that masks be worn when out in public.

[March 31, 2020—FAQs](#)

Should the general population be wearing masks?

Yes, per CDC recommendations we should all wear masks when going out in public places to further decrease transmission of the virus.

Are there any risks with the general population wearing masks?

Masks and the wearing of personal protective equipment (PPE) is a skill. If you use them correctly, you can decrease risk. However, if people use them incorrectly they can give themselves a false sense of security. Masks are not a replacement for social distancing, hand washing or other longstanding recommendations. Masks are to be used in addition to these practices to further decrease viral transmission.

[March 31, 2020—FAQs](#)

What is Dr. Osguthorpe's PPE routine?

He uses hand sanitizer and then dawns his gown, gloves, and mask before going in and caring for the patient. Afterwards, he takes off his gown and gloves, washes his hands, removes the mask, and washes his hands again.

[March 31, 2020—FAQs](#)

Should PPE be reserved for healthcare providers?

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is a limited resource at this time. We want as much of it with our healthcare providers because so much of what they do is high risk. They are on the front lines. Please don't use PPE on low-risk situations.

[March 31, 2020—FAQs](#)

Symptoms & Testing

What are the symptoms for COVID-19?

Fever, cough, and shortness of breath are the three main symptoms of COVID-19.

March 17, 2020—History & Symptoms

What are severe symptoms of COVID-19?

Severe symptoms of COVID-19 include extreme difficulty breathing, a blue coloring to the lips, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, or inability to arouse. Seek medical attention immediately if you or someone you know is experiencing these symptoms.

March 17, 2020—History & Symptoms

How long do symptoms of COVID-19 last for the typical person?

Mild to moderate COVID-19 symptoms generally last about 7-10 days, with more severe symptoms lasting longer.

March 20, 2020—Update

What should I do if I have symptoms of COVID-19?

Seek medical attention. The best way to do that is to call your physician's office, or wherever you will present yourself, and inform them that you are coming in with symptoms consistent with COVID-19. They may have a specialized way for you to present yourself for testing so that you do not infect or expose others to the virus.

March 17, 2020—History & Symptoms

If I'm not showing any symptoms, can I still get tested?

No. Please do not inundate the healthcare system with calls or visits.

March 17, 2020—History & Symptoms

Do I need to show all three symptoms to have COVID-19?

No. The triad of symptoms—fever, cough, shortness of breath—is not always seen in every person. If you have any of these symptoms, contact your medical professional and they will help you decide whether or not to seek testing.

March 18, 2020—Social Distancing & Coping

If I think I have COVID-19 but can't get tested, what should I do?

You should quarantine yourself. This means you should stay home. Do not go out and expose other people to the disease. Seek medical attention if your symptoms get worse.

March 18, 2020—Social Distancing & Coping

How are symptoms of COVID-19 different from a cold, the flu, or even seasonal allergies?

The three main symptoms of COVID-19 are cough, fever, and shortness of breath. Allergies include symptoms like watery eyes, runny nose, and sometimes even a scratchy throat. One of the things that helps differentiate COVID-19 from other things is the fever. If you have a fever, you probably have a viral disease. Aside from the triad (fever, cough, and shortness of breath), we are seeing other symptoms that have some crossover with other viral infections like influenza. You can have aches and pains, a dry cough, loss of appetite, nausea, GI complaints, etc. If you are experiencing these symptoms, speak with your doctor to determine whether or not you need to be tested.

[March 26, 2020—Update](#)

Is loss of smell an indicator of COVID-19?

There have been some reports of people who have tested positive for COVID-19 who have lost their sense of smell. We do not know if COVID-19 is the cause, but it is a link. So, if you have the triad (fever, cough, shortness of breath) along with loss of smell, you should be tested.

[March 26, 2020—Update](#)

Why is having a fever a deciding factor for COVID-19 testing?

When testing is limited, as it is in some countries right now, the most severe cases are tested first. Fever is a predictor of severe disease, as is shortness of breath. So, officials are overemphasizing those symptoms in an effort to identify the more severe cases.

[April 1, 2020—FAQs](#)

Social Distancing

What can I do help flatten the curve?

- 1) Wash your hands, 2) Stay home if you are sick, 3) Cover your coughs and sneezes, 4) Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, 5) Clean frequently touched surfaces.

March 12, 2020—Update

Should I go to work?

It depends on where you live and the recommendations of your local government, health agencies, and your doctor.

March 18, 2020—Social Distancing & Coping

Should I take public transportation?

If you can avoid public transportation, you should.

March 18, 2020—Social Distancing & Coping

Should I go to the grocery store?

Follow the recommendations of your local government and agencies. When you need to go to the grocery store, practice social distancing and proper hygiene measures.

March 18, 2020—Social Distancing & Coping

Should I still exercise?

It's really important that decrease stress and increase your health, and exercise is one of those things. What you should consider is how you can exercise more safely by avoiding crowded areas (like gyms) or using the proper hygiene measures.

March 18, 2020—Social Distancing & Coping

Can I still hang out with my friends?

Being together spreads the virus. If we want to flatten the curve, we need to limit our contact with others. Instead of getting together physically, get creative! Rely on technology and find other ways to connect.

March 19, 2020—Update

Is it safe to go for a drive?

Yes! As long as the people you're driving with are not infected. Use common sense and practice the recommended social distancing guidelines.

March 24, 2020—FAQs

Is it safe to let my kids play outside?

Yes! Being outside reduces stress. However, not all outdoor activities are the same when it comes to a risk perspective. Be careful what you're doing as an activity.

[March 24, 2020—FAQs](#)

Should I be staying six feet away from my family?

Not necessarily. Families should be physically distancing themselves from other families right now, but within the family unit you should feel free to spend time with and stay close to one another, unless you have a member of the household who is sick.

[March 25, 2020—FAQs](#)

If I get sick, how long do I need to stay quarantined to protect others?

The best answer we have now is fourteen days.

[March 25, 2020—FAQs](#)

If family members in different households were to quarantine for two weeks, could we then gather together?

Experts recommend no. The risk is still too great.

[March 25, 2020—FAQs](#)

What's the difference between quarantine and social distancing?

Quarantine involves keeping yourself isolated from others and the outside world for fourteen days. Social distancing is limiting your contact with others, remaining six feet apart from others, only gathering in small groups, and those sorts of things.

[March 25, 2020—FAQs](#)

What is Dr. Osguthorpe doing personally in his family to slow the spread of COVID-19?

We are having conversations as a family about risk and the consequences of the choices we make every day. We are severely limiting our contacts with others outside our household for as long as it takes.

[March 25, 2020—FAQs](#)

What happens after we flatten the curve?

As we flatten the curve and begin to ease up on social distancing, we will likely see additional flare-ups of the virus. Over the next year, we will likely see multiple outbreaks, though hopefully on a lower or smaller scale.

[March 27, 2020—FAQs](#)