



### What is a coronavirus?

Coronaviruses are a common kind of virus. They most often cause a cold. Sometimes coronaviruses can cause more serious illnesses.

### What is COVID-19?

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is closely monitoring an outbreak caused by a **novel** (new) coronavirus called **SARS-CoV-2**. This virus causes an illness called **COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019)**.
- COVID-19 first started in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. There are now large numbers of confirmed cases, including outside of Wuhan and in other countries.
- The first case in the United States was found on January 21, 2020. At this time, it's not clear how long it will keep spreading.

### How does COVID-19 spread?

- Doctors think coronaviruses spread from person-to-person through tiny drops of saliva or fluids from the mouth or nose. These drops are released into the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes. This is similar to the ways the flu and other respiratory diseases spread.
- The spread of coronaviruses between people usually happens when they are in close contact with each other.
- Some viruses can spread easily and quickly while other viruses are harder to spread. We don't know yet how easily the novel coronavirus spreads from person to person.

### What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

People with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness symptoms, including:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

The CDC believes that symptoms of COVID-19 may start between 2–14 days after exposure (being infected by the virus). **Anyone who thinks they may have been exposed to COVID-19 should contact their healthcare provider right away.**

### Is there a vaccine for COVID-19?

There is not a vaccine yet to prevent COVID-19.

### Can my child be tested?

Currently testing needs to be approved by the Department of Public Health. Your doctor will determine whether testing should be requested in consultation with Infection Prevention and the Department of Public Health.

### How do you treat COVID-19?

The treatment is supportive care, such as providing oxygen or breathing support if needed and staying hydrated. There is no specific treatment recommended for COVID-19 infection yet.

### How does Boston Children's prepare for new infectious diseases?

- We have a special team of doctors and nurses who train for the possibility of new or uncommon infectious diseases.
- We also have experts in Infection Prevention who advise our doctors and nurses about what protective equipment should be worn to prevent the spread of infections.
- **You can help us by telling the hospital staff if you or someone you cared for has the symptoms of COVID-19 and has traveled to mainland China in the past 14 days.** This helps our staff to identify possible COVID-19 cases and care for people who may have it right away.

### How can I help protect my family?

Follow these tips:

- **Wash your hands often with soap and water** or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- **Cover your nose and mouth** when you cough or sneeze.
- **If you don't have clean hands**, then **don't** touch your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- **Clean and disinfect areas that people often touch**, like toys and doorknobs.

### Where can I learn more about COVID-19?

Visit the CDC's website at  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

\*Information in this sheet is from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov) and the [Boston Public Health Commission](https://www.bostonpublichealth.com).

*This Family Education Sheet is available in Arabic and Spanish.*

