

COVID-19

COVID-19, also known as coronavirus disease or novel coronavirus, is caused by a type of virus that causes respiratory illness. This may lead to inflammation and the buildup of mucus and fluids in the airway of the lungs (*pneumonia*). There are many different coronaviruses. Most of these viruses only affect animals, but sometimes these viruses can change and infect people.

What are the causes?

This illness is caused by a virus. You may catch the virus by:

- Breathing in droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze.
- Touching something, like a table or a doorknob, that was exposed to the virus (*contaminated*) and then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.
- Being around animals that carry the virus, or eating uncooked or undercooked meat or animal products that contain the virus.

What increases the risk?

You are more likely to develop this condition if you:

- Live in or travel to an area with a COVID-19 outbreak.
- Come in contact with a sick person who recently traveled to an area with a COVID-19 outbreak.
- Provide care for or live with a person who is infected with COVID-19.

What are the signs or symptoms?

COVID-19 causes respiratory illness that can lead to pneumonia. Symptoms of pneumonia may include:

- A fever.
- A cough.
- Difficulty breathing.

How is this diagnosed?

This condition may be diagnosed based on:

- Your signs and symptoms, especially if:
 - You live in an area with a COVID-19 outbreak.
 - You recently traveled to or from an area where the virus is common.
 - You provide care for or live with a person who was diagnosed with COVID-19.
- A physical exam.
- Lab tests, which may include:
 - A nasal swab to take a sample of fluid from your nose.
 - A throat swab to take a sample of fluid from your throat.
 - A sample of mucus from your lungs (*sputum*).
 - Blood tests.