**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.