

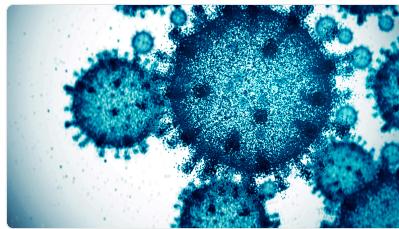


About COVID-19

JUNE 13, 2024

KEY POINTS

- COVID-19 (coronavirus disease 2019) is a disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus.
- It can be very contagious and can spread quickly.
- As of June 1, 2024, nearly 1.2 million people have died of COVID-19 in the U.S.



Learn about COVID-19 and how it spreads

About COVID-19

COVID-19 most often causes respiratory symptoms that can feel much like a cold, the flu, or pneumonia. COVID-19 may attack more than your lungs and respiratory system. Other parts of your body may also be affected by the disease. Most people with COVID-19 have mild symptoms, but some people become severely ill.

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[Symptoms of COVID-19](#)

Some people, including those with minor or no symptoms, will develop Post-COVID Conditions – also called "Long COVID."

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[Long COVID Basics](#)

How COVID-19 spreads

COVID-19 spreads when an infected person breathes out droplets and very small particles that contain the virus. Other people can breathe in these droplets and particles, or these droplets and particles can land on others' eyes, nose, or mouth. In some circumstances, these droplets may contaminate the surfaces they touch.

Anyone infected with COVID-19 can spread it, even if they do **NOT** have symptoms. COVID-19 can even spread from people to animals in some situations.

Risk factors for severe illness from COVID-19

Some people are more likely than others to get very sick if they get COVID-19. This includes people who:

- are older
- are immunocompromised (have a weakened immune system)
- have certain disabilities or
- have underlying health conditions

Understanding your COVID-19 risk and the risks that might affect others can help you make decisions to protect yourself and others.

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[People with Certain Medical Conditions and COVID-19 Risk Factors](#)

About variants

Viruses are constantly changing, including the virus that causes COVID-19. These changes occur over time and can lead to the [emergence of variants](#) that may have new characteristics, including different ways of spreading. Slowing the spread of the virus, by protecting yourself and others, can help slow new variants from developing.

Prevention

There are many actions you can take to help protect you, your household, and your community from COVID-19. CDC's [Respiratory Virus Guidance](#) provides actions you can take to lower the risk of COVID-19 transmission (catching and spreading COVID-19) and lower the risk of severe illness if you get sick.

KEEP READING

[Staying Up to Date with COVID-19 Vaccines](#)

KEEP READING

[How to Protect Yourself and Others](#)

SOURCES

CONTENT SOURCE:

National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases; Coronavirus and Other Respiratory Viruses Division