

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

What you need to know

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases like Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a new strain of coronavirus that hadn't previously been identified in humans. It emerged out of China, late last year.

? Q&As

What are the symptoms of 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19)?

The symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to a range of other respiratory illnesses, such as influenza ('flu'). They include fever, cough and difficulty breathing. Difficulty breathing is a sign of possible pneumonia and requires immediate medical attention.

What is the treatment for the 2019 novel coronavirus?

There is no specific treatment for the disease caused by COVID-19. However, many of the symptoms can be treated based on the person's clinical condition (breathing support for people with breathing difficulties, for example). As this is a new virus, there is currently no vaccine available.

Who is more likely to get the coronavirus?

People of all ages are being infected, but older people and those with medical conditions seem most likely to get seriously ill.

What should I do if I'm feeling unwell?

If you are feeling unwell with **minor symptoms**, call your local doctor (don't just turn up), or the dedicated coronavirus line: **0800 358 4533** (or +64 9 358 5453 for international SIMS) for advice. Interpreters are available and the line operates 24/7. If you are feeling unwell with **more serious symptoms**, such as difficulty breathing, seek medical attention urgently. Call ahead and mention any overseas travel (in the past 14 days) or contact with a person who has COVID-19.

What can you do to protect yourself, your family and the community?

We can all play a part in helping keep ourselves and others well. The most important action is to practice good cough, sneeze and hand hygiene.

COVID-19: Protect yourself and others

	Cover coughs and sneezes Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or your crooked elbow. Throw used tissues in the bin, then wash your hands (wash your hands after wiping children's noses too).
	Wash your hands regularly Wash and dry your hands regularly and thoroughly (at least 20 seconds) with soap and water, or use hand sanitiser. This is especially important before handling food and after using the toilet.
	Use tissues when spitting If you need to spit, spit into a tissue, throw it in the bin and wash your hands afterwards.
	Don't share food utensils If you are sharing food, do not use your own spoon, fork, or chopsticks to pick food from the sharing plates – this can spread illness through saliva.
	Masks Only wear a mask if you have respiratory symptoms such as a cough or runny nose, or if you are caring for someone with these symptoms. If you are well, good cough, sneeze and hand hygiene is more important than wearing a mask. Information about the effectiveness of masks and how to use them is available on the World Health Organization website (under 'Protect yourself').
	Self-isolate If you have returned from overseas, or had contact with someone confirmed with COVID-19, in the past 14 days, you are required to self-isolate for 14 days and register your details with Healthline: 0800 358 5453 (+64 9 358 5453). Self-isolation means avoiding any situation where you may come in close contact with others (face to face contact closer than two metres for more than 15 minutes). Find out more at www.covid19.govt.nz .
	Be socially responsible Show respect and kindness to others during this challenging global situation. There is no need to panic-buy at supermarkets. Travel restrictions apply to people, not products; air and sea freight deliveries will continue.
	Don't travel New Zealanders are advised not to travel at this time. Visit safetravel.govt.nz for more information.

Visit: www.covid19.govt.nz