

## TRANSMISSION

## CONTAGION

## INCUBATION

## WHAT IS IT?

- Covid-19 is a virus of the coronavirus family that mainly attacks cells within the respiratory apparatus, possibly causing respiratory diseases, including pneumonia.
- The elderly, the vulnerable, and people with chronic diseases are more likely to develop a severe form of the disease.
- Covid-19 is a new disease. Scientific knowledge about it is evolving constantly, so it is essential to keep up to date, referring to reliable sources:  
[www.salute.gov.it/nuovocoronavirus](http://www.salute.gov.it/nuovocoronavirus)

## HOW IS IT TRANSMITTED?

Covid-19 is transmitted from person to person via infected droplets in respiratory secretions.

- Infected droplets can be spread by:

**COUGHING** **SNEEZING** **SPEAKING AT CLOSE DISTANCE**

- The droplets can get into the body through the:

**MOUTH** **NOSE** **EYES**

- Contagion occurs by way of

- Breathing in infected droplets

- Touching a surface on which droplets have fallen with your hands and then touching your eyes, mouth or nose



## WHO IS CONTAGIOUS?

Potentially we are all contagious, because **even those with no symptoms** can transmit the virus.

- Asymptomatic carriers: those who show no symptoms can be contagious especially in a period of 24-48 hours before the symptoms appear
- Symptomatic carriers: highly contagious, regardless of how severe the symptoms are.
- Convalescents: people who are recovering might still transmit the virus, so it is important to protect yourself with proper preventive measures to avoid the risk of infection even with those who have no symptoms.

## HOW LONG DOES INCUBATION LAST AFTER YOU ARE EXPOSED TO THE VIRUS?

- 2 to 12 days on average
- 95% of cases are manifest within 12 days of exposure
- Consequently the World Health Organization indicates 14 days as a reasonable period of quarantine for a person who has been exposed

## ONCE YOU'VE RECOVERED, ARE YOU PROTECTED AGAINST THE RISK OF GETTING THE DISEASE AGAIN?

You are likely to have developed antibodies that protect against re-infection, but we still do not know how long this "protection" may last – probably a period of months.

To learn more about MSF's action to stop the Covid-19 epidemic: [www.msf.it/covid19](http://www.msf.it/covid19)



## SYMPTOMS

## DIAGNOSIS

## VULNERABLE GROUPS

## CASE DEFINITION

## WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON SYMPTOMS?

- TEMPERATURE
- COUGH
- BREATHING DIFFICULTY
- SORE THROAT
- MUSCLE PAIN
- GENERAL TIREDNESS

In molti pazienti è stata riscontrata la perdita di gusto e olfatto come sintomo iniziale.

## HOW IS THE DIAGNOSIS MADE?

- ➔ Self-diagnosis is not possible
- ➔ Presence of the disease must be confirmed by nasopharyngeal swab
- ➔ The swab has to be analysed in laboratories certified by the Istituto Superiore della Sanità
- ➔ Only a physician can prescribe the swab test, after assessing clinical symptoms and the patient's medical history



## IS THERE A CURE?

- As yet no drug has been approved for treatment or prevention of Covid-19.
- Important: avoid “do-it-yourself” medication and taking drugs without a doctor's prescription.
- For patients with mild symptoms, physicians may prescribe ordinary anti-flu drugs.

## WHO IS MOST AT RISK?

## THE ELDERLY

## THOSE WITH PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS

So it is essential to shelter older people and those with chronic diseases from the risk of infection, preventing contact with people who may potentially be infected.

## WHO IS POTENTIALLY INFECTED?

- People with Covid-19 symptoms
- People who have been in close contact with someone who has the disease and may be contagious, transmitting the virus even while showing no symptoms

## WHAT DO WE MEAN BY “CLOSE CONTACT”?

- Living in the same house with someone who is positive for the virus
- Direct physical contact (embracing, shaking hands) with someone who is positive
- Touching objects that are potentially infected (dirty handkerchiefs, clothing, etc.)
- Being in an indoor environment for at least 15 minutes at a distance of less than 2 meters from someone who is positive

If you think you have Covid-19 symptoms or have been in close contact with someone who has the disease, **you must immediately notify your family doctor** or else call your Region's toll-free number for coronavirus.



**EFFECTIVE PROTECTION REQUIRES MUTUAL TRUST AND SURVEILLANCE OF YOUR OWN HEALTH AND THAT OF THE PEOPLE YOU COME INTO CONTACT WITH.**

**BY PROTECTING YOURSELF AND THOSE AROUND YOU, YOU PROTECT THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY.**

### WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR YOURSELF

- ➔ Maintain a healthy, regular lifestyle
- ➔ Keep informed by reliable sources, but don't overload on news: [www.salute.gov.it/nuovocoronavirus](http://www.salute.gov.it/nuovocoronavirus)
- ➔ Don't expose yourself to risk of contagion. Limit contacts and number of outings
- ➔ Monitor your health every day, checking for the appearance of symptoms
- ➔ If you are ill, stay home, call your doctor and don't go to work
- ➔ If you are in a vulnerable group (chronic disease, say, or pregnancy) notify your employer and protect yourself first of all



### WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR THOSE YOU ARE CARING FOR

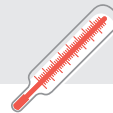
- ➔ Help them to understand that the lockdown is important, essential for prevention
- ➔ Help them maintain social contacts via social media and telephone
- ➔ Create occasions for recreation and fun, possibly using gardens or terraces
- ➔ Maintain their routine, help them to keep a healthy lifestyle and regular schedule
- ➔ Regularly check the health of those you assist. If symptoms appear, contact a doctor or the Region's toll-free number

### IF YOU ARE ASSISTING SOMEONE WITH COVID-19

- Protect yourself properly, with the right protective equipment



- Check his/her state of health often



- If the symptoms worsen, immediately notify a physician or call "112"



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### MEASURES FOR INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL IN HOME CARE

#### PREVENTING AND CONTROLLING CONTAGION IS FUNDAMENTAL IT SAFEGUARDS BOTH HEALTHCARE WORKERS AND PATIENTS

##### PREVENTION AT HOME AND AT WORK

- ➔ Wash your hands – it’s the most effective preventive measure
- ➔ Avoid unnecessary social contacts
- ➔ Keep your distance – at least 1 meter from anyone outside the family
- ➔ If work requires you to be in contact with others, use appropriate protective equipment (e.g. gloves and face mask)
- ➔ Sanitize your home regularly
- ➔ If you are ill, notify your doctor immediately and avoid all contact with others



##### HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF DURING DOMESTIC WORK AND CARING FOR VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS?

Beforehand, learn the state of health of those you will be caring for: **if they have symptoms** indicating Covid-19 or **have been in contact with persons positive for the virus**, have them call a doctor and avoid all contact.

##### WHEN YOU ARRIVE

- Make sure those you assist do not have symptoms
- Change your clothes and shoes and leave those for “outside” at the door
- Wash your hands before and after every procedure
- Use towels and dishes reserved solely for you
- If you use the bathroom, disinfect it **before and after use**

##### WHILE WORKING

- The house must be disinfected every day, using diluted bleach or ethyl alcohol products
- Air out the house, open the windows
- Use protective equipment adequate for what you have to do

##### WHEN YOU HAVE FINISHED

- Throw your protective equipment into a sack, close it, and throw it into the non-recyclable waste bin
- Wash your hands with care
- Wash your work clothes separately, at a temperature of at least 60° C.
- Don’t use the same clothes at another work place

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## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

### PPE FOR DAILY USE



• SURGICAL MASKS



• DISPOSABLE GLOVES

### PPE IN CASE OF CONTACTS AT RISK



• MASKS WITH AIR FILTER



• PROTECTIVE GOGGLES OR VISOR



• DISPOSABLE SMOCK

### PREVENTION AT HOME AND AT WORK

- Keep informed on the regulatory measures in effect in your region
- Remember that PPE is effective only if used properly
- Use of protective equipment is **no substitute for washing your hands**
- Use PPE that is adequate to the activity you have to perform
- Put the PPE on correctly and with care
- Be careful not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth when wearing PPE
- Most PPE is disposable; do not re-use it
- When you take it off, be careful not to touch the outside parts and throw them into a special sack, which you then close and dispose of in the non-recyclable waste bin
- Keep working surfaces well disinfected



### PPE IS IMPORTANT FOR YOUR PROTECTION BUT NOT SUFFICIENT IF YOU FAIL TO OBSERVE THE RULES OF HYGIENE

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Covid-19 epidemic: [www.msf.it/covid19](http://www.msf.it/covid19)





## WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF SUSPECTED COVID-19 INFECTION

- IF:** → You or those you are caring for show symptoms of covid-19 infection
- You or those you are caring for have had close contact with someone who has covid-19:
    - call your family doctor and ask for instructions
    - if he/she doesn't answer, call the national coronavirus number or "112"
    - go into self-isolation, avoid social contacts, including with those who live with you, until the doctor gives you instructions
    - don't go to a hospital or clinic unless the doctor expressly tells you to
    - don't take drugs without a doctor's prescription
    - if the doctor asks for a swab test, follow the instructions given to you, and until the result is known do not go out and do not have contact with anyone

**REMEMBER THAT COVID-19 SYMPTOMS ARE SIMILAR TO THOSE OF MANY COMMON DISEASES AND THAT EVEN ASYMPTOMATIC PERSONS CAN TRANSMIT THE INFECTION. SO ALWAYS PAY CLOSE ATTENTION, FOR YOURSELF AND THOSE YOU ARE CARING FOR.**

### **IF A DOCTOR OR THE HEALTH AUTHORITIES ORDER HOME ISOLATION FOR YOU OR THOSE YOU ARE CARING FOR:**

- Do not go out. Avoid contact with anyone at all
- Stay in a separate room from the other people in your home
- If possible, reserve a bathroom exclusively for yourself
- Maintain your social contacts by phone and Internet
- Ask and offer help in procuring necessities
- Take your temperature every morning and evening
- If symptoms appear or worsen, call your doctor at once
- Wear a face mask if you have to come into contact with others
- Wash your hands often
- Air rooms out frequently
- Follow the rules of respiratory hygiene scrupulously
- Have special dishes and silverware, sheets and towels, reserved for your exclusive use
- Dispose of potentially contaminated waste separately
- Sanitize the surfaces of the rooms you have stayed in
- Never suspend the quarantine without the doctor's permission



**IF YOU ARE CARING FOR A PERSON WHO HAS OR IS SUSPECTED OF HAVING COVID-19, ALWAYS USE PROPER PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND SCRUPULOUSLY FOLLOW THE RULES OF HYGIENE**



## WHO IS VULNERABLE. HOW TO REDUCE THE RISK OF CONTAGION

- People older than 60 and those with chronic diseases or who are immune-depressed are most exposed to the risk of contracting a severe form of the disease.
- People with neurological disturbances or disabilities will have trouble taking the precautions necessary to protect themselves from contagion. They are therefore at greater risk of contracting the disease.

### IN CARING FOR THESE GROUPS, THEREFORE, THE GREATEST POSSIBLE ATTENTION IS NECESSARY

#### IF YOU ARE CARING FOR THE SICK OR ELDERLY:

- Reassure them, explaining calmly and simply the reasons for the restrictive measures.
- As much as possible, prevent them from leaving home or frequenting crowded or indoor spaces.
- Help them to procure necessities (food, medicines) by home delivery.
- They don't have to go to their doctor's office for prescriptions or routine check-ups; they can contact the doctor by phone and use digital prescriptions.
- Try to keep a two-week supply of the medicines that they are taking regularly.
- Help them to contact friends and relatives by phone and Internet.
- If they are not self-sufficient, observe hygiene rules and wear personal protective equipment, which protects you and above all those you are caring for.
- Make sure you check their health; if you notice some change, call the doctor.

#### IF YOU ARE CARING FOR AN OLDER PERSON:

- Limit outings and visits.
- Follow the rules of prevention and hygiene scrupulously.
- Schedule visits and check-ups so as to limit trips to hospital.



#### IF YOU TAKE CARE OF A PERSON WITH IMMUNE DEFICIENCY:

- The change imposed by the new rules may be destabilizing: calmly and repeatedly explain the reasons for it, tranquilizing them.
- As far as possible, maintain their habits and institute a routine.
- Use memos, drawings or videos to enable them to understand the new rules and preventive measures.
- Check their health constantly, paying attention to any change. Disorientation may be a first symptom of mental instability or disease.





## PSYCHO-SOCIAL REACTIONS TO THE EPIDEMIC. HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

### WHO IS MOST AT RISK?

The epidemic is a serious threat to psycho-social well-being, both your own and that of those you are caring for. You may find:

Somatic reactions, with symptoms that can resemble those of covid-19 .

Anxiety, even panic attacks, sleep disorders, difficulty concentrating and other psychological disturbances.

### HOW TO CARE FOR YOURSELF AND OTHERS, LIMITING THE DAMAGE THE EPIDEMIC DOES TO OUR WELL-BEING

- MAINTAIN SOCIAL CONTACTS

- KEEP INFORMED, USING RELIABLE SOURCES

- MAINTAIN OR CREATE A DAILY ROUTINE

- CARE FOR YOURSELF

- TRY TO SLEEP WELL. SLEEP IS IMPORTANT!

### COVID-19 AND THE SENSE OF FEAR

For many people, the epidemic produces a constant sense of fear. Fear is a fundamental emotion. It helps to protect you. Fear is not your enemy! Just do not allow fear to overcome you, to paralyze your activity.

### WHAT TO DO TO MANAGE FEAR?

Face the situations that cause fear, don't avoid them or withdraw into yourself. Make the changes you need to get control of the situations that provoke fear.

Recognize that you are nervous. This is okay, it's normal. You can be afraid without losing control.

### MANAGE YOUR FEAR, 4 SIMPLE STRATEGIES:

**1 Recognition:**  
Recognize what it is that scares you. Ask yourself: "What am I feeling? What am I thinking?"

**2 Analysis:**  
Asses the real risks, distinguish them from imaginary risks.

**3 Socialization:** You are not the only one to be afraid, you can find an outlet and support by sharing your fear with people you trust.

**4 Decomposition:** Try to break your fear down into its different component elements: not knowing what to do in case of contagion // feeling unsafe when you are in a group // .... This will help you to take useful actions.

For advice, consult <https://www.medicisenzafrontiere.it/covid19-salute-psicosociale/>

And if you need outside help:

<https://www.psy.it/materiali-prodotti-dalle-associazioni-societa-scientifiche>

<https://d66rp9rxjwty.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Guida-anti-stress-per-i-cittadini2.pdf>

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