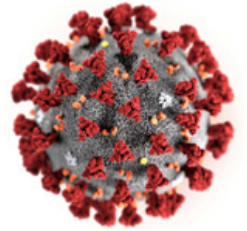




# Coronavirus (COVID-19) Fact Sheet



This information is from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for Veterans, their families, friends, volunteers, and employees. It describes COVID-19, symptoms, and steps to prevent spreading the virus.

## What is COVID-19?

This is a new type of coronavirus affecting humans. Scientists are learning more about this virus and how it impacts people.

## How does it spread?

This virus can spread from person-to-person. Like flu, it spreads in droplets in the air from breathing, coughing, or sneezing. These droplets are easy to inhale and infect anyone nearby. When the droplets land on a surface it can spread when you touch the surface then touch your own mouth, eyes, or nose or someone else. Some viruses are spread more easily and are more harmful. Others are milder, like a cold.

## What are the symptoms?

Illness from COVID-19 can range from mild symptoms to severe illness and death. Symptoms can include:

- fever
- cough
- shortness of breath

## Does COVID-19 spread when there are no symptoms?

Yes, people can still spread the virus

- before getting sick
- when sick
- even if they do not have symptoms

Symptoms may show starting in two days or up to 14 days or longer after infection.

## If I have symptoms what should I do?

Call your PACT team, VA contact, or your VA telephone triage line before going to your local VA. They will help you decide what to do.

## If you have a fever, cough or shortness of breath or other symptoms:

- Call your local PACT team, VA contact, or your VA telephone triage line right away **before** visiting your local VA.
- Please don't visit our patients and residents. **Instead**, phone them or use video chat.

## If I am not sick, is it safe to visit VA for appointments?

Yes. VA is working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). We will provide updates to the Veteran community online and on social and news media if something changes.

## How do you treat COVID-19?

Treat symptoms the same way you would a cold or fever. Right now, there is no vaccine to help your body fight it. If you think you have COVID-19 or may have been exposed, call your local PACT team, VA contact, or your VA telephone triage line right away.

## Is it safe to travel abroad?

Consult travel advisories on the U.S. Department of State website: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html/>

## How can I protect myself and others from COVID-19?

- If you are sick, stay home and away from others.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with your arm/sleeve or use tissues. Dispose of tissues in the trash.
- Keep your hands clean by washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Avoid people who are sick.
- Avoid places where many people are closely gathered.
- Clean surfaces and objects often.
- Don't travel to areas known to have COVID-19 outbreaks.
- Get a flu shot to protect you from flu.



## Learn more

VHA Internet:

<https://www.publichealth.va.gov/n-coronavirus/index.asp>

CDC Internet:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>