

# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

A Teen's Guide to Understanding and Coping with COVID-19

## WHAT IS COVID-19?

COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus.

The new virus and disease were unknown before the outbreak began in Wuhan, China in December 2019.

(World Health Organization, 2020)

## SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

Fever  
Cough  
Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing  
Chills  
Repeated shaking with chills  
Muscle pain  
Headache  
Sore throat  
New loss of taste or smell  
(CDC, 2020)

## HOW DOES COVID-19 SPREAD?

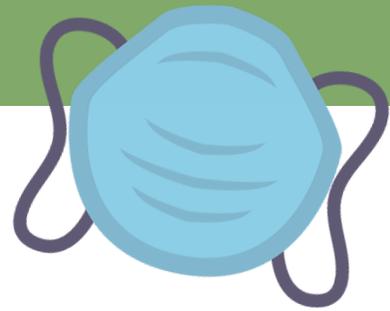
The virus spreads from person to person. Respiratory droplets exit the body of an infected person when someone sneezes, coughs, or talks. The droplets enter the healthy body by landing in the mouth, eyes, or when they are breathed into the lungs.

This occurs when people are close together.

COVID-19 may spread from people who don't show symptoms and may not know they are sick.

The best way to prevent getting sick is to avoid being exposed by practicing social distancing guidelines.

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19, but many scientists across the world are working very hard to create one (CDC, 2020).



\*Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE SYMPTOMS?

1. Tell your parent or caregiver.
2. Your caregiver should call your doctor.
3. Depending on your symptoms, your doctor may request you get tested or he/she may ask you to stay at home until you are symptom free.

Remember that you can help your family and community by staying inside and away from other people regardless of whether or not you get tested.

## HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF AND MY LOVED ONES?

WASH YOUR  
HANDS

AVOID  
TOUCHING  
YOUR FACE

PRACTICE  
SOCIAL  
DISTANCING

COVER YOUR  
NOSE AND  
MOUTH WHEN  
YOU LEAVE THE  
HOUSE

PRACTICE GOOD  
HYGIENE WHEN  
YOU COUGH OR  
SNEEZE

DISINFECT  
COMMONLY  
TOUCHED  
SURFACES,  
INCLUDING CELL  
PHONE

(CDC, 2020)

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**BEING A TEENAGER RIGHT NOW IS PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT. HERE ARE SOME OF THE STRESSORS YOU MAY BE EXPERIENCING.**

**YOU MAY BE EXPERIENCING ONE OF THESE STRESSORS, ALL OF THESE STRESSORS OR OTHERS NOT LISTED. FEELING STRESS IS NORMAL. BEING ABLE TO IDENTIFY WHAT IS CAUSING YOU STRESS IS HELPFUL.**

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Friends are an important source of support and you are being asked to greatly reduce or eliminate in person peer interaction.

You may experience canceled milestones. Whether you were looking forward to graduation, prom, field trips, spring sports, family, trips, or something else, canceled or postponed events may cause feelings of disappointment and frustration.

School provides a sense of purpose, accomplishment, and social interaction.

Attending virtual school may not feel as fulfilling and you may miss school, your friends, and teachers.

You are aware of the financial impact to your family. Financial changes could bring big changes and consequences to your life.

As teens continue to seek independence, it may be stressful to be confined at home with your family.

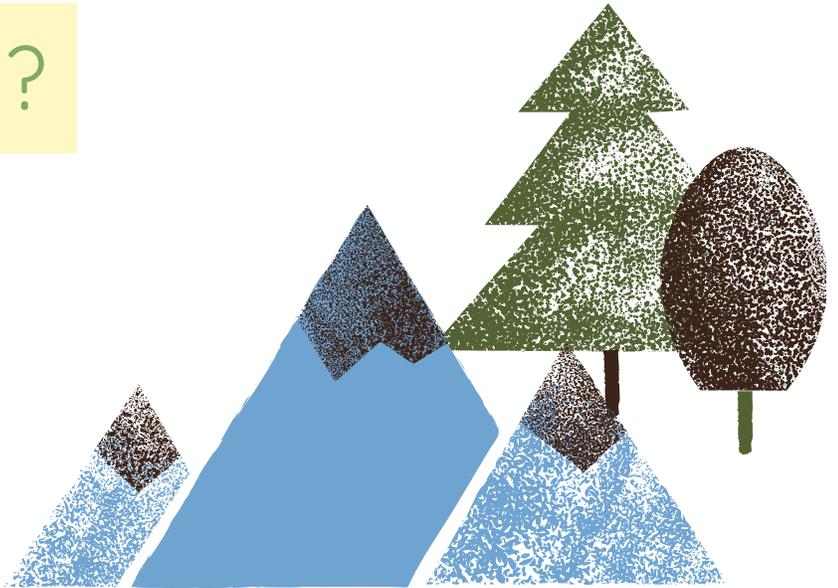
Teens are known to take more risks than adults due to feelings of invincibility. This may lead to wondering why it is important for you to take precautions.

Teenagers have a strong understanding of how people get sick and how serious COVID-19 can be. It is normal to be scared for yourself and for your loved ones.

## WHAT CAN I DO?

Call or video chat friends  
Take a walk outside  
Go for a hike  
Plant a garden  
Have a virtual movie night  
Listen to music  
Take a bike ride  
Learn a new skill

**\*What are other quarantine activities you like to do?**



## HOW TO COPE

- Recognize and accept your emotions and stress responses - however you feel is okay.
  - Reach out to those you trust - friends, caregivers, or teachers.
  - Take care of your body by eating well, exercising, and practicing good personal hygiene.
- Utilize distraction by focusing on alternative activities to take your mind off of your stressors.
  - Focus on what you can control.

## RESOURCES

Some kids find it helpful to have a lot of information. Make sure you are getting your information from trusted sources. If you would like to discover more, please look at these websites:

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

<https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/>