

# WHAT IS CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)?



**Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person.**



## How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 is now spreading from person to person across the country. The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It is also possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes.

## How can I protect myself?

People can help protect themselves with everyday preventative actions:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, elbow, or shoulder (not bare hands)
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that has at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.



## Who is at higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19?



- Older adults
- People who have chronic medical conditions like:
  - Heart disease
  - Diabetes
  - Lung disease

## If you are at risk, you should:

- Have supplies on hand such as extra necessary medications (insulin, blood pressure medicine, etc.)
- Over the counter medicines and medical supplies (such as tissues) to treat fever and other symptoms.
- Household items and groceries on hand so that you will be prepared to stay at home for a period of time
- Avoid crowds as much as possible
- Avoid cruise travel and non-essential air travel
- When you go out in public, avoid contact with others who are sick, limit close contact and wash your hands often
- Don't forget to have enough food and medication for your pets



If you have a fever, cough, or trouble breathing AND have recently traveled internationally/OR have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, call your healthcare provider or the DHSS Novel Coronavirus Informational Hotline: 877-435-8411.

