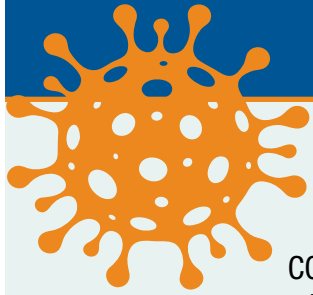# Know the facts
about coronavirus

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness caused by a new strain of the coronavirus. Coronaviruses are a family of viruses that can cause mild to severe illness. This new coronavirus has spread in people only since December 2019. Health experts are learning more and more about this new coronavirus and the illnesses it causes. At present there is no treatment for or vaccine to prevent COVID-19.

How does coronavirus spread?

The virus is spread mainly from person-to-person through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby – within about 6 feet. COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms. It is also possible to get infected after touching an object that has the virus on it.

How severe is COVID-19?

Health experts are learning more and more about who becomes sick and the range of illness from coronavirus. Reported cases have ranged from mild illness (similar to a common cold) to severe pneumonia that requires hospitalization. So far, deaths from COVID-19 in Oregon have been reported mainly in older adults who had other health conditions. From the beginning of the pandemic, most children with the novel coronavirus had very mild symptoms. More recently, a new illness in children has been reported that causes severe inflammation throughout the body. The children with this illness are very sick and require hospitalization.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. The most common symptoms include:

Cough

Chills

Fever

Sore throat

Muscle pain

Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

New loss of sense of taste or smell

Who is at risk for getting the coronavirus?

Anyone who comes into contact with the virus can become infected and may or may not show symptoms – coronaviruses spread easily to adults and children. No group of people is more likely to get or spread the virus. However, we continue to learn about groups at higher risk of becoming severely ill with COVID-19 including: people with chronic health conditions, people living in group care settings, health care and other essential workers.

How can I protect myself and others?

The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus.

Steps you can take include:

- Stay home if you are sick.

- If you are at higher risk, stay home as much as possible even if you feel well.

- If you become sick while in public, return home, self-isolate, and call your health care provider.

- Practice good hand hygiene with frequent handwashing.

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects.

- Cover coughs/sneezes with elbow or tissue.

- Avoid touching your face.

- Practice physical distancing - six (6) feet between you and people who you do not live with.

- Wear cloth, paper or disposable face coverings in public.

- Stay close to home. Avoid overnight trips and travel the minimum distance needed to obtain essential services.

For individuals with disabilities or individuals who speak a language other than English, OHA can provide documents in alternate formats such as other languages, large print, braille or a format you prefer. Contact Mavel Morales at 1-844-882-7889, 711 TTY or OHA.ADAModifications@dhsoha.state.or.us.

Oregon **Health** Authority

PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION

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