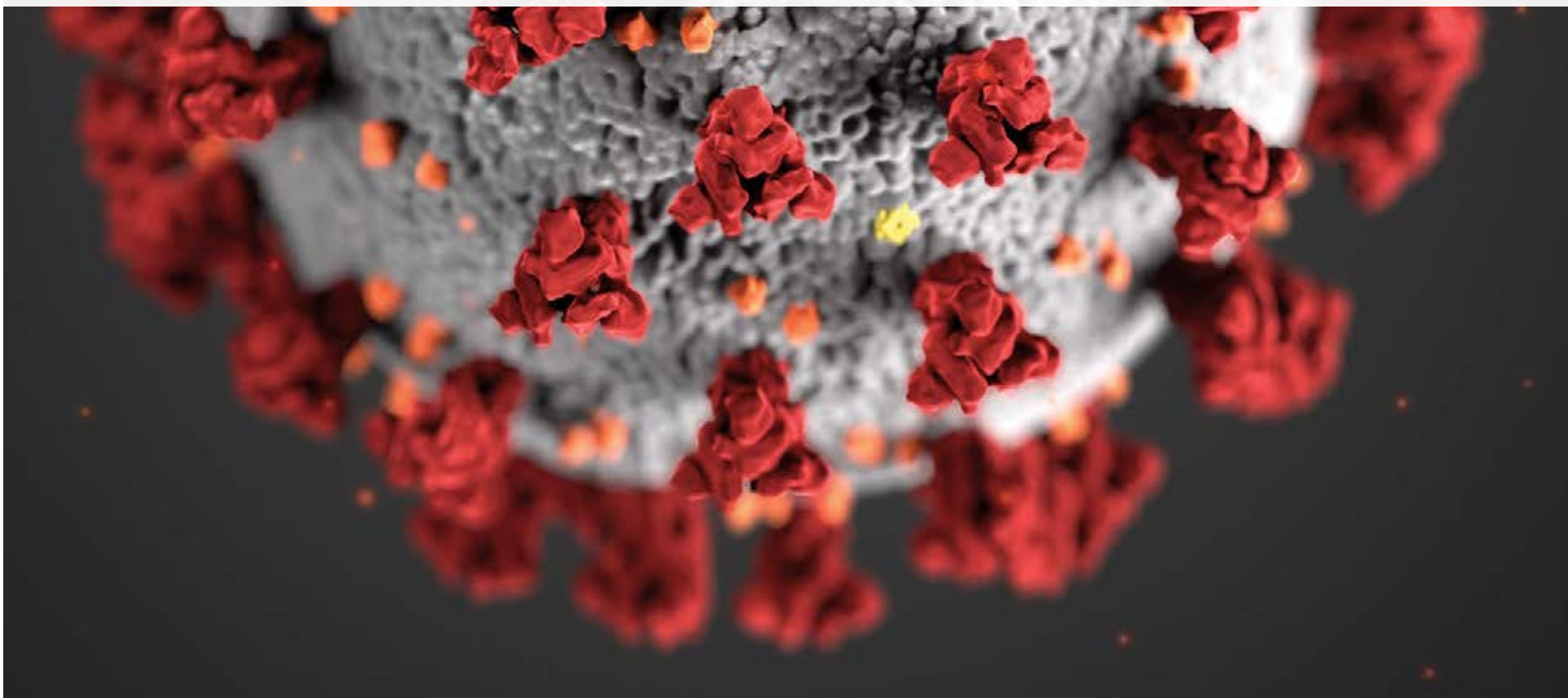


CORONAVIRUS Just the Facts



ALISSA ECKERT, MS, DAN HIGGINS, MAMS/CDC

A special publication of The Livingston Enterprise brought to you by Jane Tecca and Claree Tecca of Spectacular Homes.

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What is Coronavirus?

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is the disease caused by the new coronavirus that emerged in China in December 2019. It can be spread from person to person and is diagnosed with a laboratory test.

According to Johns Hopkins Medicine, diagnosis may be difficult with only a physical exam because mild cases of COVID-19 may appear similar to the flu or a bad cold.

There is no coronavirus vaccine yet. Prevention involves frequent hand-washing, coughing into the bend of your elbow and staying home when you are sick.

Here are a few frequently asked questions to help you better understand COVID-19, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

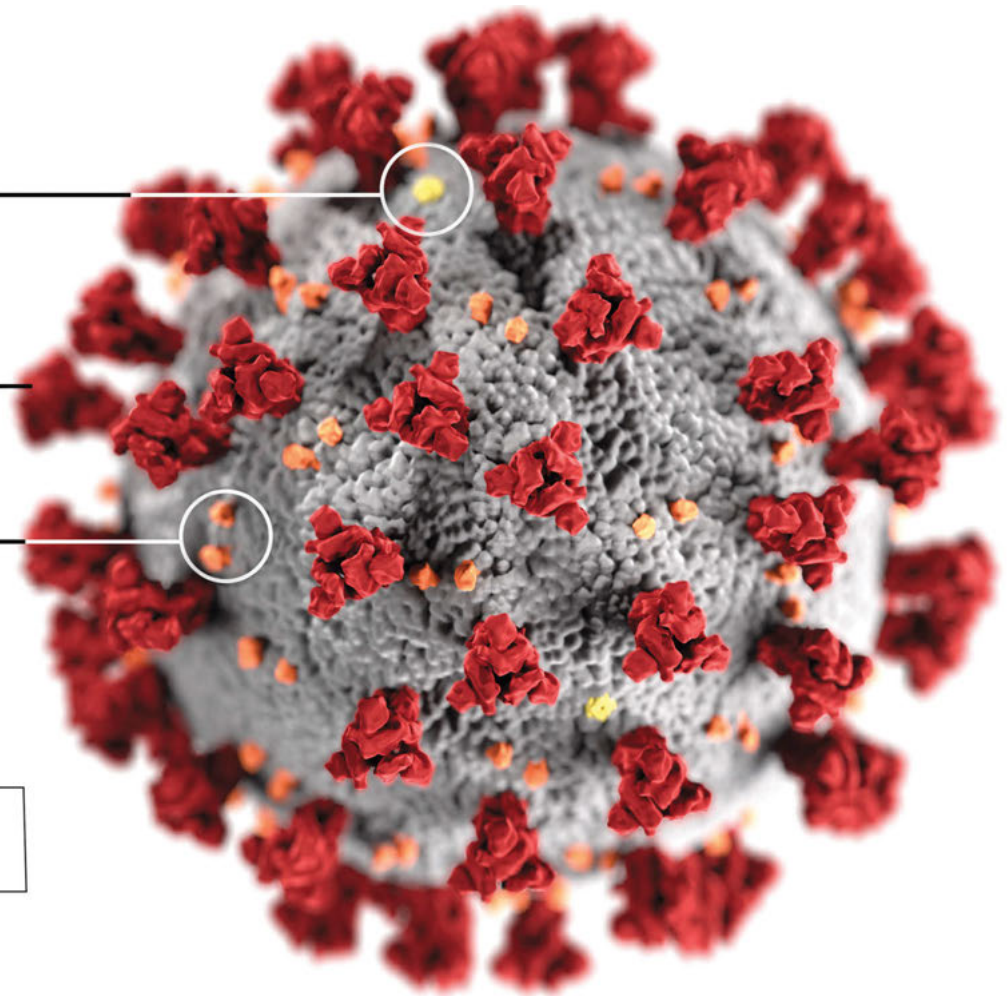
WHY IS THE DISEASE CALLED CORONAVIRUS AND COVID-19?

On Feb. 11, 2020 the World Health Organization announced an official name for the disease. The name of this disease is coronavirus disease 2019, abbreviated as COVID-19. In COVID-19, 'CO'

E protein

S protein

M protein



COVID-19

stands for 'corona,' 'VI' for 'virus,' and 'D' for disease. Formerly, this disease was referred to as "2019 novel coronavirus" or "2019-nCoV."

HOW DOES THE VIRUS SPREAD?

This virus was first detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China. The first infections were linked to a live animal market, according to the CDC, but the virus is now spreading from person to person.

The virus that causes COVID-19 seems to be spreading easily in the community and in some affected geographic

areas. This means people have been infected with the virus in an area, including some who are not sure how or where they became infected.

WHO IS AT THE HIGHEST RISK FOR CONTRACTING COVID-19?

Early information out of China shows that some people are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness, including older adults, according to the CDC. People who have serious chronic medical conditions like heart disease, diabetes and lung disease also are at higher risk.

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IS THIS CORONAVIRUS DIFFERENT FROM SARS?

SARS stands for severe acute respiratory syndrome. In 2003, an outbreak of SARS started in China and spread to other countries before ending in 2004.

The virus that causes COVID-19 is similar to the one that caused the 2003 SARS outbreak: Both are types of coronaviruses. Much is still unknown, but the CDC reports that COVID-19 seems to spread faster than the 2003 SARS and also may cause less severe illness.

Symptoms and Testing

The symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to the flu or a severe cold. If you think you have been exposed to the virus through contact with someone else who has been affected, you should call your health care provider immediately for medical advice.

Emergency warning signs and serious symptoms include:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath.
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest.
- New confusion or inability to arouse.
- Bluish lips or face.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states that this list is not all-inclusive and urges Americans to consult their medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning.

WHEN TESTING IS NECESSARY

If you are a close contact of someone with COVID-19 or you live in a community where there is ongoing spread of COVID-19 and develop symptoms of COVID-19, call your health care provider and tell them about your symptoms and your exposure. They will decide whether you need to be



tested.

People who are mildly ill may be able to isolate and care for themselves at home. Your local medical professionals will be able to consider your case and deliver sound advice.

WHAT IF YOU'RE SICK?

The CDC makes the following recommendations to those feeling sick or afflicted with a mild case of COVID-19:

Stay home. People who are mildly ill with COVID-19 are able to isolate at home during their illness.

You should restrict activities outside your home, except for getting medical care.

Avoid public areas. Do not go to work, school or public areas.

Avoid public transportation. Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing or taxis.

CONTACTING YOUR DOCTORS

People at higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19 should contact their health care provider early, even if their illness is mild. This can help doctors make more

^{CDC} informed decisions, like whether or not you should be hospitalized or if you should be tested for the virus. The CDC reports that older adults and people who have severe underlying chronic medical conditions like heart or lung disease or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing more serious complications from COVID-19.

If you are very sick, get medical attention immediately. If you develop emergency warning signs for COVID-19, get medical attention immediately.

Helping Children Cope

It is very important to remember that children look to adults for how to react during stressful times. With the COVID-19 virus gaining international media attention, information about the pandemic is everywhere.

If parents seem overwhelmed with the situation, children will naturally react in the same way. As parents, teachers and other adults in the lives of children, it's up to us to reassure and educate them in the most honest, compassionate way possible.

TIPS ON INTERACTING WITH CHILDREN

Here are some tips on talking about COVID-19 with your children or students, according to the National Association of School Psychologists.

- Remain calm and reassuring.
- Make yourself available.
- Avoid excessive blaming.
- Be aware of their exposure to the news.
- Maintain a normal routine, if possible.
- Be honest and accurate.



HANDLING CHILDREN'S ANXIETY

What you say and do about COVID-19 can either increase or decrease your children's anxiety levels related to the virus and the news they are hearing. Remind them that you and the adults at their school or daycare are there for them to keep them safe and healthy.

Always let your children talk about their feelings in a safe way. This will help them get things into the open and allow for opportunities for you to educate them on what's going on.

MODEL BASIC HYGIENE

The NASP recommends you teaching children the following hygiene measures:

- Wash hands multiple times a day for at least 20 seconds (the time it takes to sing Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star slowly).
- Cover mouths with tissue when sneezing or coughing and throw away the tissue immediately, or sneeze or cough into the bend of the elbow.
- Do not share food or drinks.
- Practice giving fist or elbow bumps instead of handshakes.

CARRY ON WITH NORMAL LIFE

Encourage your child to eat a balanced diet, get enough sleep and exercise regularly. Not only will this give them comfort during disruptions, but it will help their immune system stay strong.

Going along with this guidance, you should also take the time to talk with your children. Don't go out of your way to avoid conversations related to COVID-19. If they have questions, be ready to give them educated answers and advice on dealing with any inquiries they may have.

Managing Stress and Anxiety

The outbreak of COVID-19 may be stressful for people and communities to handle, especially as new information continues to be released at seemingly breakneck speeds. This stress can be difficult for people to handle.

Maybe you have an older adult in your life with pre-existing medical conditions that could make them more at risk to catch coronavirus. Maybe your workplace recently shut down due to bans on public crowds and you're worried about where your next paycheck is coming from.

We all handle stress differently, and there is not a one-size-fits-all solution to overcoming these emotionally challenging times. Fortunately, there are plenty of beset practices you can follow to make illness-induced stress easier to manage.

WHO IS STRESSED?

There are certain segments of the population who may be more susceptible to stress than others.

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, here are some examples of our coun-



try's most vulnerable populations:

- People who have preexisting mental health conditions including problems with substance use.
- Children.
- People who are helping with the response to COVID-19, like doctors and other health care providers, or first responders.

WHAT REACTIONS MIGHT THEY HAVE?

According to SAMHSA, there are a wide range of emotions that come with dealing with stress. They include:

- Fear and worry about your own health status and that of your loved ones who may have been exposed to COVID-19.
- Changes in sleep or eating patterns.
- Difficulty sleeping or concentrating.
- Worsening of chronic health problems.
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco or other drugs.

HOW TO HANDLE STRESS

People with preexisting mental health conditions should continue with their treatment plans during an emergency and monitor for

any new symptoms.

SAMHSA recommends connecting with family, friends and others in your community to overcome stress.

Other actions to take include avoiding excessive exposure to media coverage of COVID-19 and taking good care of both your body and mind. This can include regular exercise and meditation, as well as eating healthy, getting plenty of sleep and avoiding alcohol and drugs.

If you think you may be dealing with a form of depression, reach out to your doctor immediately for a consultation and potential treatment.

Protective Measures

Avoiding COVID-19 requires smart hygiene and consistent protective measures. There are many simple steps you can take to protect yourself, your family and friends. Follow the steps below to give yourself the best chance of preventing the onset of COVID-19.

WASH YOUR HANDS

Clean hands can be the key to making it through the coronavirus pandemic as healthy as possible. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.

If soap and water are not readily available, experts recommend using a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol. When using sanitizer, cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Experts also recommend avoiding close contact with



people who are sick. Social distancing means keeping reasonable space between yourself and other people if COVID-19 is spreading in your community.

This is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick. Avoid large crowds and public gatherings to cut down your risk of contracting the virus. This also includes staying home from work or school if you're sick. Think about others who

you may be putting at risk and make the responsible decision.

WEAR A FACE MASK IF YOU ARE SICK

If you are sick, you should wear a face mask when you are around other people and before entering a health care provider's office.

If you are not able to wear one, try your best to fully cover your coughs and sneezes. Recommend that people who are caring for you wear a face mask if they enter your room.

CLEAN AND DISINFECT

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces on a daily basis. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends cleaning and disinfecting tables, tablets, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keys, keyboards, tools, utensils, toilets, faucets and sinks.

If surfaces are dirty, clean them by using detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.

Clean and Disinfect your Space

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends straightforward cleaning measures to reduce our chances of contracting COVID-19. Follow the simple tips below to ensure your home stays as safe and healthy as possible.

If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.

For effective disinfection, use diluted household bleach solutions, alcohol solutions with at least 70 percent alcohol and common EPA-registered household disinfectants.

Diluted household bleach solutions can be used if appropriate for the surface, but always follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation.

The CDC states that unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted.

HOW TO PREPARE A BLEACH SOLUTION

Follow these mixing instructions to create an effective bleaching solution: 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) bleach per gallon of water; or 4 tea-



spoons bleach per quart of water.

OTHER PRODUCTS

Products with EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens claims are expected to be effective against COVID-19 based on data for harder to kill viruses, according to the CDC.

For soft, porous surfaces such as carpeted floor, rugs and drapes, the CDC recommends you remove visible contamination if present and clean with appropriate cleaners indicated for use on these surfaces.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

When cleaning your home or office, be sure to wear disposable gloves for all parts of the cleaning process, including handling trash.

Additional equipment might be required based on the cleaning or disinfectant products being used and whether there is a risk of splash. Always remove your gloves and gowns carefully to avoid contamination of the wearer and the surrounding area.

Wash your hands immediately after removing the gloves for extra protection.

DOING LAUNDRY

Performing laundry properly is an important aspect of keeping your family's health in good shape. Wash items in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and then dry items completely.

Do not shake dirty laundry, as doing so can increase the possibility of dispersing virus through the air. Laundry that has been in contact with an ill person can be washed with other people's items, according to the CDC. Be sure to disinfect hampers and baskets.

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