

COVID-19 symptoms

Symptoms can include mild to severe respiratory illness with fever, dry cough, shortness of breath and difficulty in breathing. Some patients experience body aches, muscle pain, headaches, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat, diarrhea, nausea or loss of smell and taste.

Note: The above symptoms doesn't mean that you have the disease, unless you have a recent travel history or you have been in contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case.-

The spread of the virus:

COVID-19 spreads from person-to-person through contaminated droplets, which travel from a sick person through coughing or sneezing or through touching an infected surface, then touching the eyes, nose and/ or mouth.

Prevention

You can prevent getting COVID-19 by following a number of important precautionary measures:

1- Keep your hands clean all the time

- You must keep the hands clean and avoid touching the eyes, nose and mouth with unclean hands. You must also avoid touching surfaces until you have cleaned or sterilized them.
- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- If soap and water are not available, you can use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth unless you have washed your hands or sanitized them.

2- Physical distancing

Avoid close contact with people, especially those showing respiratory and other symptoms, and maintain a sufficient distance between you and them (not less than 2 meters) at all times.

3- Wear a face mask

Everyone should wear masks when they interact with others.

4- Healthy daily routine

- Everyone should maintain a healthy lifestyle at home, maintain a healthy diet, sleep well and stay active
- Maintain a healthy routine as much as possible
- Keep in touch with your loved ones over the phone or video calls
- Children and elderly need more love and attention than adults during such difficult times
- It is normal for you to feel sad, tense or confused during a crisis. Talking to people you trust, such as friends and family can help you. If you feel your condition is getting worse, talk to a specialist.

Sanitization

Hygienic handling of personal items

- Personal items require cleaning and sanitization as they can get contaminated
- It is advisable not to share personal items with others except when necessary.
- If you intend to share any personal item, you must ensure it is cleaned, sanitized and disinfected before it is reused to prevent any transmission of infection.
- To avoid damaging your device (such as mobiles, computers etc.) choose an appropriate sanitization method depending on the device that requires sanitization.
- Ensure that all surfaces are cleaned and sanitized properly. Do not miss any corners and spaces, especially any corners between devices, computer keyboards and the space between the keyboard buttons.
- It is advisable to regularly clean furniture using an appropriate sanitizer.
- Regularly clean and sanitize car parts such as the door handles and the steering wheel, especially if another person has used the vehicle.
- Wash worn clothes on a daily basis, especially when exposed to pollution or dirt, or after caring for any ill person or after caring for an animal.
- Do not follow any unauthorized or unofficial sanitization procedure or use any chemical mixture as this may lead to harmful and toxic gas fumes that can harm your health or can damage the devices/items you intend to sanitize.
- Some items are difficult to sterilize. For example: banknotes. It is preferable to immediately sanitize your hands after using banknotes.

Workplace sanitization guidelines

Offices are considered high-risk due to close proximity and contact with staff members. Therefore, it is important to maintain highest level of sanitization and hygiene at work to protect employees and customers.

- Practice social distancing, keep a distance of 2 meters from other individuals
- Ensure that the workplace has an effective and sustainable ventilation system.
- Office spaces including all surfaces, chairs, tables, door handles, curtains etc. should be regularly sanitized using appropriate disinfectants. All necessary cleaning protocols and procedures should be followed.
- Ensure that strict disinfection and sterilization procedures are applied especially in toilets, washrooms and common use facilities.
- Ensure the application of strict disinfection and sterilization procedures in elevators.
- Employees should maintain physical distancing and disinfect hands after they use elevators.
- Employees should adhere to personal hygiene measures including washing their hands and sanitizing regularly.
- All employees should adhere to coughing and sneezing etiquette.
- If possible, work remotely and follow all remote working protocols and procedures.
- Replace glass cups with single-use disposable cups.

Boosting immunity

Boosting your immunity and the important role of your immune system in preventing COVID-19. There are ways to boost immunity:

- Proper nutrition: eat well-balanced meals
- Consume immune-boosting foods such as antioxidants and probiotics
- Stay physically active
- Get adequate sleep
- Avoid/ minimize stress
- Avoid smoking
- Stay up-to-date with vaccines

Know that your strong immunity will not protect you from COVID-19 unless you comply with precautionary measures

Nutrition and immunity

The body's immune system is the first line of defense against infectious diseases and to function efficiently it needs healthy and balanced food. Some foods that support immunity are:

- Citrus fruits like grapefruit, oranges, lemons, etc. enhance the immune system's response against infections.
- Amino acids found in nuts (walnut and almonds) and grains (pumpkin seeds and sesame seeds) help generate nitric oxide that supports immune cells.
- Vitamin A found in liver, sweet potatoes and carrots and Zinc found in meat and seafood such as shrimp, contribute to regulating cell division and enhancing immunity.
- Vitamin E present in nuts and vegetable oils plays an important role as an antioxidant and may interact with some enzymes that support the immune system.
- Selenium found in whole grains and seafood (like oysters) and Vitamin C found in foods such as kiwi and bell pepper boost the immune system.
- Probiotics in dairy products have an effect on boosting immunity by reducing or delaying the emergence of infectious diseases.