

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Need to Knows provide older adults and their families with important information to enhance their hospital or nursing home stays. Communication and teamwork are important aspects of high-quality healthcare. The individual, family, and caregivers are vital members of the team.

Coronavirus is a respiratory illness. COVID-19 can be passed from person to person through droplets from coughs or sneezes.

What are the symptoms?

COVID-19 vs. Flu

Signs and Symptoms	COVID-19	Influenza
Symptom onset	2–14 days after exposure	Abrupt
Aches	Severe chest pain or pressure	Usual, often severe
Chills	Common while fever is present	Fairly common
Fatigue/Weakness	Usual	Usual
Sneezing	Sometimes	Sometimes
Stuffy nose	Rare	Sometimes
Sore throat	Sometimes	Sometimes
Chest discomfort, cough	Shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, persistent cough	Common, can be severe
Headache	No	Common
Fever*	Lasts at least 3–4 days; older adults may not present with fever	Usual, lasts 3–4 days

What to do if you show symptoms?

- Stay at home.
- Stay away from others.
- Monitor your symptoms.
- Call your doctor before you leave home to seek medical care.
- Avoid public transportation and ridesharing.
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

People who suspect they had COVID-19 but were not tested can leave home after: three full days of no fever (without the use of medicine that reduces fevers), other symptoms have improved, and 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

Check out [tips from the CDC for how best to wash your hands](#).