

HOME SELF-CARE FOR COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

Coronavirus COVID-19

COVID-19 is caused by a virus called Coronavirus. Coronaviruses are a common cause of the common cold. COVID-19 is a novel (newly discovered) Coronavirus that is currently causing illness across the world. Most of those infected will have a limited and mild case. It will feel more like a cold. Most people who become infected with COVID-19 will be able to care for themselves at home. Currently there is no specific anti-viral treatment for COVID-19, and there is no vaccine at this time. Antibiotics such as penicillin do not kill viruses.

In general, follow these three basic rules:

- (1) Keep warm and rest as much as possible. If you feel like resting, you should.
- (2) Take plenty of fluids. Food is not as important since appetite will return when you are well.
- (3) For fever, take Tylenol or Motrin in normal doses (see label on the bottle). Note the time you take.

If cough is present: Humidification and drinking lots of fluids helps to moisten and loosen up sticky mucus. Non-prescription drugs designed to suppress cough, such as Delysm, Robitussin, are occasionally helpful. If you use an inhaler, you might need to use it more often.

If throat is sore: Gargle with warm water (1/2 tsp salt in 1/2 glass of water). Try cold packs to the outside of your throat to help ease the pain of swallowing. Humidification of the air you breathe (use vaporizer, pans of evaporating water, or steaming tub or shower) and lots of fluids help.

If temperature is elevated: Fluids are doubly important. Fever medicine (such as Tylenol or Motrin) should control temperature. Persistent temperature elevation of 103-104 degrees is a danger sign.

If nausea and/or diarrhea are present: Eat only clear liquids, soups, or juices as tolerated. Remember fluids are important to prevent dehydration.

If your symptoms worsen call 911 and advise them you may have COVID-19 if you notice:

Persistent temperature elevation greater than 103-104 degrees despite fever medication.
Coughing up blood or increasing chest pain.
Increasing difficulty getting your breath.
Stiff neck preventing bending neck and placing chin on chest, especially with headache.