



COVID-19 Questions, Answers, and Other Information

Updated 8/24/2020 | 5:00 p.m.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Please go to the CDC website for a comprehensive list of COVID-19 questions and answers:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>.

Q: Can children spread COVID-19?

A: Studies suggest that children likely have the same or higher viral loads of COVID-19 compared with adults and that they can spread the virus.

Q: If a person gets tested three (insert any # here) times for COVID-19 and are positive each time is it counted as one case or three cases?

A: Regardless of how many positive tests one person has, they are only considered and reported as one case. After the first positive test result, all subsequent test results are attached to the original case file.

Q: What is the process for reporting a case of COVID-19 in EIPH's region?

A: Public health receives positive test results directly from the hospital or lab. Once those results are received, public health contacts the case and begins an epidemiological investigation. The lab results are then entered into the database and reported by public health as an official case of COVID-19.

Q: What is an "active case" of COVID-19 and how can a case be reported and released from monitoring by EIPH on the same day?

A: Active cases are the number of cases (confirmed and probable) currently monitored by EIPH. Once a case is released from monitoring, they are no longer considered an active case. An active case can be released from monitoring when 10 days have elapsed from their date of symptom onset and there has been an improvement of their symptoms including no fever for at least 24 hours without using fever reducing medication. When the turnaround time for test results is slow, say 8-10 days, by the time we get the positive test results, the 10 days have already elapsed and the case is ready to be released. Therefore, cases can be added and released on the same day. To see the current number of active cases in all our counties, please go to our website at www.EIPH.Idaho.gov.

Q: What does it mean to be released for monitoring from COVID-19?

A: A person can be released from monitoring by EIPH when there has been at least 10 days since symptom onset and there has been an improvement of symptoms including no fever for at least 24 hours without fever reducing medication. When a case is released from monitoring for COVID-19, they can end isolation and return to normal activity.

Q: What is a probable case of COVID-19?

A: A probable case of COVID-19 is defined as:

- A person who develops symptoms after having contact with a known, confirmed case during a period of time the case was infectious and does not receive confirmatory testing themselves. This is the definition that has been used regularly since early on in the pandemic.
- A symptomatic person who tests positive with an antigen test.
- A contact of a known, confirmed case who tests positive with an antigen test.

Q: Are masks/face coverings effective at slowing the spread of COVID-19?

A: CDC recommends that people wear masks/face coverings in public settings and when around people who don't live in your household, especially when physical distancing (6 feet) cannot be maintained. Masks may help prevent people who have COVID-19 from spreading the virus to others.

Q: Are some people not able to wear masks/face coverings?

A: Masks should NOT be worn by children under the age of 2 or anyone who has trouble breathing, is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance. Certain mental health conditions also can make wearing a mask/face covering difficult.

General COVID-19 Information:

- **What is COVID-19?**
 - COVID-19 (CO/Corona + VI/Virus + D/Disease + 19/2019 – the year it was discovered). COVID-19 is a highly infectious respiratory disease caused by a new or novel coronavirus. The disease was discovered in China in December 2019 and has since spread around the world.
- **Signs or symptoms of COVID-19?**
 - Cough | Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Or at least two of these symptoms:
 - Fever
 - Chills
 - Repeated shaking with chills
 - Muscle Pain
 - Headache
 - Sore throat
 - New loss of taste or smell

*This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.
- **How is the virus spreading?**
 - This virus is spreading from person-to-person, most likely in droplets from when a sick person coughs or sneezes. Spread is more likely when people are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) for longer periods of time (>15 minutes).
 - The virus seems to be spreading easily and sustainably in the community (“community spread”). Community spread means people have been infected with the virus in an area, including some who are not sure how or where they became infected.

- The virus can be present on surfaces. How long it can survive on surfaces is not known at this time.
- **How severe is the virus?**
 - Most people with COVID-19 recover and do not require hospitalization. A much smaller percentage of people get severely ill with respiratory problems like pneumonia.
- **Who is most at risk for complications of COVID-19?**
 - Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19:
 - People aged 65 and older
 - People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility

People of any age with the following conditions are at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19:

- Chronic kidney disease
- COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant
- Obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 or higher)
- Serious heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies
- Sickle cell disease
- Type 2 diabetes mellitus

COVID-19 is a new disease. Currently there are limited data and information about the impact of underlying medical conditions and whether they increase the risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Based on what we know at this time, people with the following conditions might be at an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19:

- Asthma (moderate-to-severe)
- Cerebrovascular disease (affects blood vessels and blood supply to the brain)
- Cystic fibrosis
- Hypertension or high blood pressure
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from blood or bone marrow transplant, immune deficiencies, HIV, use of corticosteroids, or use of other immune weakening medicines
- Neurologic conditions, such as dementia
- Liver disease
- Pregnancy
- Pulmonary fibrosis (having damaged or scarred lung tissues)
- Smoking
- Thalassemia (a type of blood disorder)
- Type 1 diabetes mellitus

- More information can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-increased-risk.html>.

Testing:

- **Do I need to be tested?**
 - Please see the Decision Tree to determine if you need to be tested for COVID-19. https://eiph.idaho.gov/Home/Hot%20Topics/Coronavirus/EIPH%20COVID19%20Decision%20Tree%20wMonitoring%20Log_rev%207-06-20.pdf.
- **What providers offer testing?**
 - Please call ahead and speak with your healthcare provider about the potential for testing.
- **If I don't have a healthcare provider, how do I find one?**
 - There are many great healthcare providers and urgent care facilities in our communities.
 - You can go to Eirmc.com for an online "find a doc" service if they are looking for a primary care provider.
 - You can also Google "primary care, family doctors, or healthcare providers" in <insert where they live>.
 - There are also four FQHCs (federally qualified health centers) in our region: Community Family Clinic in Idaho Falls (208-528-7655), Grand Peaks in Rexburg (208-356-4900) and St. Anthony (208-624-4100), and Challis Area Health Center (208-879-4351). They can be a great resource for you.

Current Situation:

- **Who has tested positive?**
 - We do not release names of individuals that are being monitored, tested, or have been found to have COVID-19.
 - Visit www.EIPH.Idaho.gov and refer to our Data Dashboard which is updated daily.
- **How many cases do we have in Idaho and how many people have been tested?**
 - Please go to <https://coronavirus.idaho.gov/> for current COVID-19 case counts and the number of people tested through the Idaho Bureau of Laboratories and private labs.

How to Help:

- **What can I do to reduce the spread of COVID-19?**
 - Wear a mask/face covering while in public if you are around non-household members and not able to maintain appropriate physical distancing (at least 6') from others.
 - Avoid people who are sick. If you are sick, stay home and limit contact with others.
 - Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or your sleeve when you cough or sneeze.

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs using a disinfecting solution.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub with at least 60% alcohol.
- **What does isolation and quarantine mean?**
 - Isolation and quarantine help protect the public by preventing exposure to people who have or may have a contagious disease. **Isolation** separates sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick. **Quarantine** in Idaho refers to a physical location (house, building, apartment, or other place) where people must be kept from contact with the public. It prevents people from leaving or entering the location during the period the location is under quarantine.
- **Do I need to self-isolate?**
 - You only need to self-isolate if you have COVID-19 test results pending or have had direct contact/exposure with a confirmed case of COVID-19 and you have been directed to self-isolate by the health department or a healthcare provider.

Resources:

- **Local Public Health District Hotlines (for public health district outside of EIPH's boundaries which are the counties of Bonneville, Clark, Custer, Fremont, Jefferson, Lemhi, Madison, and Teton)**
 - District 1 | Panhandle Health District | 877-415-5225
 - District 2 | Idaho North Central Health District | 866-736-6632
 - District 3 | Southwest District Health | 208-455-5411
 - District 4 | Central District Health | 208-321-2222
 - District 5 | South Central Public Health District | 208-737-1138
 - District 6 | Southeast Idaho Public Health | 208-234-5875
- **City of Ammon**
 - **Will city functions cease during this outbreak/pandemic?**
Please contact the City of Ammon for answers to your questions.
Website: www.cityofammon.us. Questions or concerns can be submitted to the city on its homepage. To speak with a representative from the City of Ammon, please call 208-612-5000.
- **Other Government Offices**
 - **Will city, county, and state offices remain open during the COVID-19 pandemic?**
Before seeking services at government offices, please check their website, Facebook page, or call ahead to see if they are open or if they have changed their hours due to the evolving situation.

- **Idaho Falls Community Hospital (IFCH) and Mountain View Hospital (MVH)**
 - **Is IFCH or MVH Testing for COVID-19 or Providing Antibody Testing?**
For questions about testing, please call 208-528-1132 to speak with the Charge Nurse.
- **Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center (EIRMC)**
 - **Is EIRMC Testing for COVID-19 or Providing Antibody Testing?**
For COVID-19 questions, please call 208-529-6111 or visit their website at www.EIRMC.com.
- **Madison Memorial Hospital (MMH)**
 - For COVID-19 questions, please call 208-359-6900 or visit their website at www.MadisonMemorial.org.

Glossary of COVID-19 Frequently Used Words

Asymptomatic

Asymptomatic mean a person does NOT have symptoms or is not showing evidence of disease. Just because a person is asymptomatic doesn't mean they aren't infected with COVID-19.

CDC

CDC stands for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It is a US federal agency based in Atlanta, Georgia.

Community Spread

Community spread is spread of a disease where the infection source is unknown. According to the CDC, many sources of COVID-19 are due to exposure to a returned traveler who was infected.

Communicable

Communicable means "capable of being easily communicated (spread) or transmitted." COVID-19 is a communicable disease.

Coronavirus

Coronaviruses are types of viruses that typically affect the respiratory tracts of birds and mammals, including humans. They typically cause the common cold, bronchitis, and pneumonia. When a new strain of a coronavirus emerges, meaning it has never been seen before in the world, it is known as a novel coronavirus. COVID-19 is a disease caused by a novel coronavirus.

COVID-19 (CO/Corona + VI/Virus + D/Disease + 19/2019 – the year it was discovered)

COVID-19 is a highly infectious respiratory disease caused by a new coronavirus. The disease was discovered in China in December 2019 and has since spread around the world.

EIPH

Eastern Idaho Public Health is one of 7 health districts in Idaho. It is the local public health authority for the following counties: Bonneville, Custer, Clark, Fremont, Jefferson, Lemhi, Madison, Teton.

Epidemic

An epidemic is a temporary prevalence of a disease spreading from person to person in a locality where that disease is not permanently prevalent.

Epidemiology

Epidemiology is the branch of medicine dealing with the incidence and prevalence of disease in large populations and with detection of the source and cause of epidemics of infectious disease. An **epidemiologist** is a person who studies or is an expert in epidemiology.

Flatten the Curve

Flatten the curve means slowing the spread of an epidemic disease so that the capacity of the healthcare system doesn't become overwhelmed. The curve represents the number of cases over time. Flattening that curve means preventing a huge surge of new cases in a short period of time.

Herd Immunity

Herd immunity is the immunity or resistance to a particular infection that occurs in a group of people or animals when a very high percentage of individuals have been vaccinated or previously exposed to the infection.

Immunity

Immunity is the state of being immune from ("protected from a disease") or insusceptible to a particular disease; the condition that permits either natural or acquired resistance to disease. Humans don't currently have immunity to COVID-19.

Immunocompromised

Immunocompromised means having an impaired or compromised immune response; also referred to as **immune-compromised** or **immunodeficient**.

Incubation Period

Incubation period means the period between infection and the appearance of signs of a disease.

Isolation

Isolation is the complete separation from others of a person suffering from contagious or infectious disease. In public health, isolation happens when a person is infected with a communicable disease, and is separated from people who are healthy. This helps stop the spread of disease.

- **Self-isolation** is voluntary isolation. Note that everyday people may use self-isolation when they aren't infected.

Mitigation

Disease mitigation are measures taken to slow the spread of infection. Quarantine, isolation, and social distancing are forms of mitigation. Washing your hands with soap for at least 20 seconds is one important thing to do to help prevent the spread, or mitigate, COVID-19.

Pandemic

A pandemic is a disease prevalent throughout an entire country, continent, or the whole world. A pandemic is an epidemic that has spread over a large area. The World Health Organization (WHO) specifically uses pandemic to refer to new diseases people do not have immunity for and that have spread worldwide. The WHO has declared the coronavirus outbreak a pandemic. Pandemic can be both a noun and an adjective (e.g., a pandemic disease).

Quarantine In Idaho, quarantine refers to a physical location (house, building, apartment, or other place) where people must be kept from contact with the public. It prevents people from leaving or entering the location during the period the location is under quarantine.

Respirator

A respirator is a masklike device, usually of gauze, worn over the mouth (or nose and mouth) to prevent the inhalation of noxious substances or the like. To help protect them from COVID-19, health professionals wear respirators to filter out virus particles as they breathe in so they don't get infected and can help patients. For these professionals, the CDC specifically recommends using what are called N95 respirators, which fit more tightly around the nose and mouth than medical or surgical masks.

Respiration is breathing, the inhalation and exhalation of air.

Respiratory means "pertaining to respiration," as in a respiratory disease like COVID-19.

Social Distancing

Social distancing refers to measures that reduce contact between large groups of people. Social distancing measures often entail canceling big gatherings (such as conferences, classes, church services, concerts, and sporting events), restricting mass transit and travel, and working from home. The CDC specifically recommends maintaining a distance of 6 feet (2 meters) between people. During the coronavirus outbreak, people commonly spoke or wrote of **hunkering down** at home as they practiced social distancing.

Symptom

Symptom is a phenomenon that arises from and accompanies a particular disease or disorder and serves as an indication of it. Major symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, dry cough, fatigue, and difficulty breathing.

Ventilator

A ventilator is a machine that helps a patient breathe. It pumps oxygen into the lungs and removes carbon dioxide through a tube. In medicine, **ventilate** can refer to oxygenating the blood (i.e., supplying it with oxygen) or helping someone breathe using a mechanical ventilator.

Virus

A virus is an infectious agent that replicates only within the cells of living hosts. COVID-19 is caused by a virus and spreads through droplets from the mouth and nose of a person with COVID-19 after coughing, sneezing, exhaling, talking, etc.