



# 2019 Novel Coronavirus: Home Self-Monitoring for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in New York City

## About 2019 Novel Coronavirus

### 1. What are coronaviruses?

Coronaviruses are a family of viruses that are common throughout the world. They cause illnesses ranging from the common cold to more serious illnesses like pneumonia. A novel (new) coronavirus is a type of coronavirus that has not been previously seen in humans.

### 2. What is 2019 novel coronavirus?

2019 novel coronavirus is a new type of coronavirus identified as the cause of an outbreak of respiratory illness (which affects breathing) called COVID-19 that was first detected in Wuhan, China. Infections with this new virus have been reported in other regions of China and in some other countries, including the U.S.

### 3. How serious is this virus and what are the range of symptoms?

Reported symptoms due to infection with the virus that causes COVID-19 have ranged from mild to severe. Symptoms can include fever, cough or shortness of breath.

### 4. How does this virus spread?

Much is still unknown about how the virus that causes COVID-19 spreads. Current information indicates that person-to-person spread is occurring, but it is not clear how easily the virus spreads between people. Person-to-person spread is thought to occur mainly via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes, similar to how the flu and other respiratory illnesses spread.

### 5. How long before symptoms of the virus appear?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) believes at this time that symptoms of COVID-19 may appear between two and 14 days after exposure.

## Guidance for People Required to Home Self-Monitor After Returning from Countries Designated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

### 6. What is home self-monitoring?

Home self-monitoring means you check yourself for fever and remain alert for cough or shortness of breath. Everyone on home self-monitoring has been provided a plan for whom to contact during the self-monitoring period to determine whether medical evaluation is needed if they develop fever, cough or shortness of breath. People on home self-monitoring are also asked to stay at home and avoid going outside for the entire self-monitoring period. You should not attend work, school, public events or group gatherings. You can get a doctor's note online at [nyc.gov/health/coronavirus](https://nyc.gov/health/coronavirus) if you need to provide documentation of your absence to your school or employer.

**7. Why do I need to home self-monitor?**

To stop the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19 in the U.S., all people who spent time in areas designated by the CDC, within the last 14 days, are being screened at the airport for COVID-19 symptoms and risk factors for infection. After this screening:

- Travelers arriving in NYC from CDC-designated areas, who have no symptoms, will be transported to a quarantine location in NYC as directed by the CDC.
- Most travelers returning from CDC-designated areas, who have no symptoms, will be given information about home self-monitoring. They can continue to their destination. Their local health department will then be in contact with the travelers to provide more information.
- Others with possible exposures to the virus that causes COVID-19 may also be asked to home self-monitor by the NYC Health Department.

**8. I just got back from a CDC designated country and am supposed to home self-monitor. What do I need to do?**

- Take your temperature twice a day.
- Check for symptoms — cough or shortness of breath.
- Stay at home and remain out of public places. Do not go to school or work.
- If you have fever or symptoms, call the NYC Health Department at 347-396-7990.
- You need to do this for 14 days since the day you left the CDC designated country that requires home self-monitoring, even if you spent time in another country before entering the U.S.

**9. What about my family members or other people I live with?**

If members of your household were not in one of these countries, they can continue to go to school and work. If you develop fever, cough or shortness of breath, other members of your household should stay home until your symptoms are checked out by a medical provider.

**10. What should I do if I have a medical emergency?**

If you have a medical emergency while you are in home self-monitoring, you should call 911 and tell the operator about your recent travel.

**11. What should I do if I develop an illness with fever, cough, or shortness of breath?**

If you develop fever, cough or shortness of breath while in home self-monitoring, avoid close contact (within 6 feet) with other people, and call the NYC Health Department at 347-396-7990 for further instructions.

**12. What if I need to leave home to receive medical care for a chronic illness or other issue?**

If you need to see a doctor or health care provider for a medical problem, you should call your provider ahead of your visit and let them know about your recent travel.

**13. What can I do if I feel overwhelmed or distressed about being at home?**

Emotional reactions to stressful situations such as this emerging health issue are expected. It is normal to feel sad, anxious or overwhelmed, or have other symptoms of distress, such as trouble sleeping. If symptoms become worse, last longer than a month or if you struggle to participate in your usual daily activities, reach out for support and help. You can call [NYC Well](#) at 888-NYC-WELL (888-692-9355) or text “WELL” to 65173. NYC Well is a confidential helpline that is staffed 24/7 by trained counselors who can provide brief supportive therapy, crisis counseling, and connections to behavioral health treatment and support in over 200 languages.

**Returning to School or Work**

**14. Do I need to get cleared to return to work or school?**

No. If you did not have any fever, cough or shortness of breath during your 14-day home self-monitoring period, you can go back to work or school. There is no formal clearance process. People without fever, cough or shortness of breath are not tested for the virus that causes COVID-19.

**15. Who do I contact if I need a doctor’s note for my employer or school to explain my absence?**

You can download and print a doctor’s note from the NYC Health Department’s website by visiting [nyc.gov/health/coronavirus](http://nyc.gov/health/coronavirus) or calling 347-396-7990. Your school or employer may ask for documentation of your travel to confirm the dates of your home self-monitoring.

**16. My employer or school is not allowing me to return after I completed home self-monitoring. What are my options?**

There is no medical reason for your work or school to exclude you after the home self-monitoring period is over. Please show them the doctor’s note from the NYC Health Department. You can also report this situation to the NYC Commission on Human Rights by calling **311** and saying, “human rights.”

For more information on COVID-19, visit [nyc.gov/health/coronavirus](http://nyc.gov/health/coronavirus) or [cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://cdc.gov/coronavirus).

If feel you have been harassed due to race, nation of origin or other identities, call **311** and say, “human rights” to report to the NYC Commission on Human Rights.