

Your Employee Assistance Program is a support service that can help you take the first step toward change.

What is COVID-19 (Coronavirus)?

COVID-19, which may be commonly known as “coronavirus” has now been deemed a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO).

What is COVID-19?

The COVID-19 is a virus that falls under the coronavirus “family” of respiratory viruses. It can cause breathing difficulties in those who have contracted it. Experts believe that it probably originated from human contact with animals, as these types of viruses are found most often in animals. In the case of the COVID-19, expert believe that it the outbreak may have spread due do illegal trading of exotic animals.

What are the symptoms?

The symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to those of a cold of flu: fever, headache, dry cough, and body aches with the added symptom of breathing problems. The incubation period during which a person has the disease but is not exhibiting symptoms can be between one day and two weeks. It’s possible that the virus can be passed on to others during the incubation period before the person carrying starts to exhibit symptoms.

It’s important to seek medical treatment if you think you might have contracted COVID-19.

How can I avoid getting COVID-19?

The only way to get COVID-19 is to be in close physical contact with a person or animal that has contracted the virus. Because those who have been infected might not show symptoms for up to two weeks, it’s important to remain vigilant.

To best avoid catching COVID-19, the WHO recommends practicing good hand hygiene (washing hands with soap and water) and respiratory hygiene (sneezing into your elbow instead of your hand), and avoiding any unnecessary physical contact with wild animals. Practice “physical distancing”—maintain at least a metre (3 feet) of distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing and sneezing. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth, as these are the easiest way for viruses to enter your system. If you have a fever, cough, and difficulty breathing, seek medical care immediately.

There is currently no vaccine for COVID-19.

Is COVID-19 the same as SARS?

No. COVID-19 and SARS come from the same group of viruses, called coronaviruses. There can be some confusion here, as many people refer to COVID-19 as simply “coronavirus”—but COVID-19 is not the same virus as SARS. It’s also believed that because of the SARS outbreak of 2003, China is better-equipped to handle this virus outbreak.

Where can I find out more information?

WHO releases daily reports on the effects of COVID-19.
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For information about affected regions, click here.

You can also find out more information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.