



COVID-19

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus spreads from an infected person to others through:

- The air by coughing, sneezing, or talking.
- Close contact with an infected person (within about 6 feet).
- Touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.

Note: COVID-19 may be spread by people who don't have symptoms.

What steps can I take to prevent getting COVID-19?

At this time, there is no widely available vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. Steps you can take to prevent all respiratory viral infections, including COVID-19, include:

- Washing hands often with soap and water, particularly before eating, after using the restroom, or after being near someone who is ill.
- Applying hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if you don't have access to soap and water.
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Staying at least 6 feet away from people who don't live in your household.
- Covering your mouth and nose with a face covering whenever you are in a public space or around people you don't live with.
- Covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue or the inside of your elbow.
- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick.
- Limiting unnecessary travel.
- Avoiding large gatherings (indoor or outdoor).

What are common symptoms of COVID-19?

COVID-19 symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure to the virus**, including:

- Fever or chills.
- Cough.
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing.
- Fatigue (tiredness that won't go away).
- Muscle or body aches.
- Headache.
- New loss of taste or smell.
- Sore throat.
- Congestion or runny nose.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Diarrhea.

This list does not include all possible symptoms, only the most common. Please call your healthcare provider about any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.

Anyone can have mild to severe symptoms. If you do become ill, please protect others by isolating yourself at home for two weeks and until you have been symptom-free for 72 hours.

How can I tell if I have COVID-19 or the flu?

COVID-19 and the flu share many of the above symptoms. However, a new loss of taste or smell is *not* a flu symptom and may be a sign of COVID-19. Contact your healthcare provider for guidance.

When should I get emergency care for someone who has COVID-19?

If someone shows any of these warning signs, **get emergency medical care immediately:**

- A hard time breathing.
- Continuing pain or pressure in the chest.
- New confusion.
- Unable to wake up or stay awake.
- Bluish lips or face.

What increases the risk of severe COVID-19 illness?

Older adults and people who already have major medical conditions like heart disease, lung disease, weakened immune system, or diabetes are at a higher risk for getting more serious complications from COVID-19 illness.

How can I get tested for COVID-19?

If you have COVID-19 symptoms or know that you were exposed to COVID-19, and want to get tested, call your healthcare provider first. Most people will have mild illness and can recover at home without medical care.

You can find the nearest testing site at govstatus.egov.com/or-oha-covid-19-testing. The Community Health Centers of Benton and Linn Counties provide COVID-19 testing at all of their clinics. Find more info at bentonlinnhealthcenters.org.

How common is COVID-19 in Benton County?

For current information about COVID-19 in Benton County, view the County dashboards here: co.benton.or.us/covid19.

What is Benton County Health Department doing to prevent the spread of COVID-19?

Benton County Health Department is closely monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic through modeling, contact tracing, and emergency response. Contact tracing includes:

- Contacting each person who tests positive for COVID-19.
- Making sure they know to isolate at home for 10 days after testing positive or after symptoms began, whichever is later.
- Telling them what to do if they become ill.
- Tracing the contacts they had with other people, and notifying those people.

How is Oregon State University working to prevent the spread of COVID-19?

Oregon State University (OSU) is taking many actions to prevent the spread of COVID-19, such as:

- Keeping most classes online for fall and winter term.
- Testing all students who live on-campus for COVID-19 when they arrive.
- Isolating students who test positive for COVID-19 and giving them medical care.
- Requiring face coverings at all times outside of private offices or dorm rooms.
- Ongoing COVID-19 testing of students, faculty, and staff.
- Reducing the number of people in shared areas.
- Checking campus wastewater for signs of COVID-19.
- Keeping in constant communication with County and State health authorities.

You can learn more about OSU's COVID-19 prevention measures at covid.oregonstate.edu.

How can we help reduce stigma and misinformation about COVID-19?

Fear and anxiety around disease can lead to negative attitudes and beliefs toward people, places, or things. This is otherwise known as social stigma. It is important to remember that no single person or group of people are genetically more likely than others to spread COVID-19. Avoid spreading stigma or fear based on nationality, race, ethnicity, or age. To prevent spreading misinformation about COVID-19, get information from official sources like the ones below.

Information sources:

Center for Disease Control

cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html

Oregon Health Authority

govstatus.egov.com/OR-OHA-COVID-19

Benton County

co.benton.or.us/covid19

To download COVID-19 FAQs in English, Spanish, or Arabic please visit:
<https://bit.ly/BentonCoGov-COVID19FAQ>

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