



Fellow Americans,

There's so much information overload about COVID-19, it can put even the most levelheaded people on edge, and with good reason. We do not have a full grasp of the situation and what is to come, so we must exercise caution for our families, our communities and ourselves.

With the constant chatter about COVID-19, we should not turn every cough or hot flash into fear and panic. Spring has sprung, and with spring comes seasonal allergies. In addition, flu season is winding down. With that in mind, it's important to know the symptoms of COVID-19, and when to contact your health care provider.

Here is the current information, as of April 7, of COVID-19 symptoms from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). You can also use the symptom checker on the CDC website.

- **Mild symptoms:** About 80 percent of those who get COVID-19 will have mild symptoms or exhibit no symptoms. The most common symptoms are fever, coughing, and fatigue. The cough is usually dry and persistent. Some people report loss of smell and taste as early warning signs, although the CDC has not included this in its COVID-19 findings.
- **More serious symptoms:** People experience trouble breathing, chest pain or pressure, bluish lips or face, and they may become confused or have trouble staying conscious. Some people report having chills and a high fever, although the CDC has not confirmed this is a symptom of COVID-19.

If you experience symptoms, seek medical attention. Avoid public transportation to prevent spreading germs. Many health care providers now offer online appointments. Medicare changed its coverage of these visits so there is currently no copay. Contact your doctor's office for more information. If you plan to see your doctor in-person, call ahead so they know to expect you.

If you contract COVID-19, take these steps to help recover and stop the spread. This is very important, even if you only have mild symptoms, so you don't put someone else's life at risk.

- Self-quarantine following your doctor's orders
- Get plenty of rest

- Stay hydrated
- Ask your doctor about over-the-counter medications
- Monitor your symptoms closely and stay in touch with your health care provider
- If you are living with others, try to stay in a separate room, use a separate bathroom, and avoid sharing dishes, cups, glasses, utensils, towels and bedding.
- Wear a facemask
- Clean high-touch surfaces daily

Consult with your health care provider before you end your self-quarantine. Most people can end self-quarantine if they meet all three of these criteria:

1. Have not had a fever for at least 72 hours without taking any fever-reducing medicine.
2. Other symptoms have improved, such as a cough or shortness of breath.
3. At least 14 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared.

There may be unique circumstances regarding your condition that could change your treatment, your recovery time, and how long your doctor asks you to stay quarantined. Follow your doctor's orders above all. Remember, if your doctor clears you to end quarantine, this does not mean you should go out unnecessarily. For now, the best thing you can do to fight COVID-19 is to stay home.

Knowing what to look for, what to do, and how to care for yourself is vital to stopping the spread and to get you back on your feet. I hope you are safe and sheltered-in-place at home with your loved ones – providing much needed support and love to one another.

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