

Frequently Asked Questions on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) for Young Children and Students

What is a coronavirus?

Coronavirus is a word you might have heard online, at school or on TV. Coronaviruses (a type of germ) are common. Usually, they cause the common cold. But, now a newly-discovered virus (novel coronavirus) is causing a disease called COVID-19. This is a lung infection. A lot of the signs that you're sick are like the cold or flu.



Where did the new novel coronavirus come from?

We think this coronavirus usually lives in bats. At first, one person was infected from an animal, but now it is spreading from one person to another.



Are there sick people in Alberta?

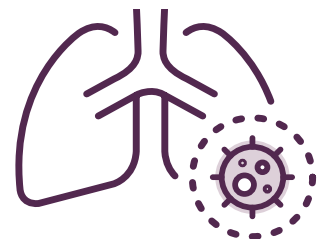
Yes, but most people who are sick have a mild case, and there aren't a lot of cases in kids. If kids do get the virus, it's usually very mild.



People need to stay home so they don't spread the virus to anyone else.

What kind of illness does the novel coronavirus cause?

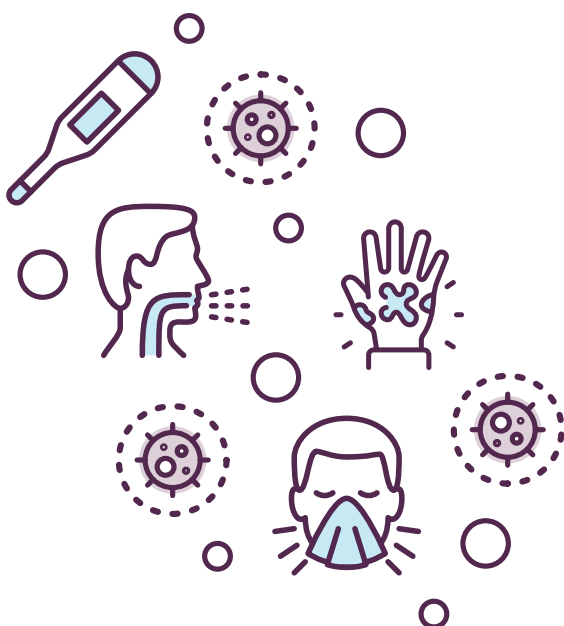
Most healthy people who are infected with the new, or novel, coronavirus will have a mild illness like a cold or flu. They may have a fever, cough, sore muscles or a sore throat. Some people may feel short of breath.



Young people are more likely to have a mild illness.

People who are much older or who already have health problems are more likely to get sicker with novel coronavirus and may need to be in the hospital. You can help protect them from the virus by not visiting if you are sick.

While you may not be able to visit, it's important to stay in touch. Call, text, video chat or mail letters and pictures. Connect often as it's easy to feel lonely when you can't see the important people in your life.



How does Covid-19 spread?

Novel coronavirus spreads the same way as other viruses that cause colds and flu.

When people cough or sneeze, tiny drops of liquid go into the air. If the person has the coronavirus, the virus can be in those droplets and make others sick.

One way a person can get sick is by breathing in tiny drops that have the virus in them, that can happen while talking with or being close to someone who is sick.

Another way is by someone touching something that tiny drops have landed on and then touching their mouth, nose or eyes.



Sharing dishes and forks and spoons, water bottles and drink containers could also spread the virus from someone who is sick to someone who is not.

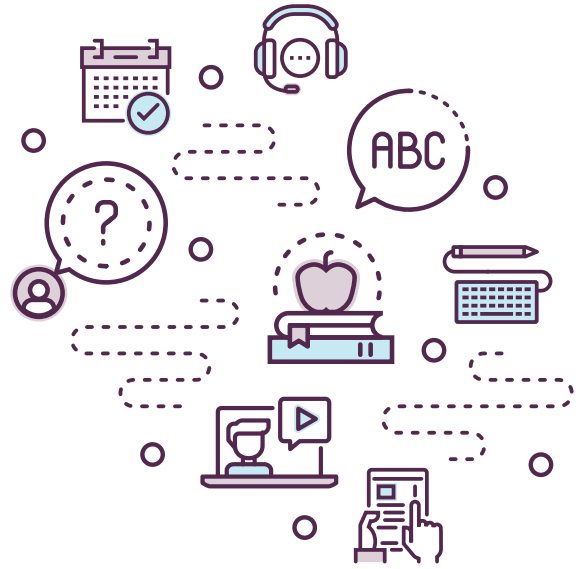
How do I avoid getting sick?

Wash your hands really well and often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Soap and water are always best. But, if soap and water are not available, you can use hand sanitizer.

If your hands are dirty, or you have touched a surface others also have touched, wash your hands. Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth until your hands are washed.

Cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue, then wash your hands.



Why do I have to stay home from school?

It's to keep you safe from the virus. School is closed, but you can keep learning. It is important to keep up with your schoolwork and try and establish a routine at home. Teachers are looking at how they can teach you online, or in other ways.

What can I do to help a friend or classmate who is worried about novel coronavirus?

It is normal for people to worry about something new that is happening. Some of your friends and classmates may be worried about becoming sick, or they may be worried about friends or relatives in other countries.

You can help your friends and classmates by listening to their worries and sharing what you know from trusted sources. For example, you can go online to alberta.ca/COVID19.

Washing your hands, not touching your face, and staying home when you are sick are the best ways to help you and your friends stay healthy.

If there is anything you might be confused or worried about, don't be afraid to ask someone you trust.

Where can I learn more?

You can find trustworthy information about novel coronavirus by visiting the Government of Alberta website at alberta.ca/COVID19.

Some of the information on the website may be scientific or technical, so it may be better to look at the website together with a parent or a trusted adult.

CBC Kids News has some great videos about how to protect yourself from coronavirus.