



Durham Region Health Department Facts about...



Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

What is it?

COVID-19 is a viral infection that primarily affects the lungs. Some people may have a mild illness. Others may get very sick, including seniors or people with a pre-existing health condition. Some people are at greater risk of getting COVID-19 because of their work or living conditions. Very rarely, some children can get a serious inflammatory condition. The long-term effects of COVID-19 are not fully known.

A Variant of Concern (VOC) is when the COVID-19 gene changes or mutates. A VOC can be stronger, more contagious, and more resistant to public health measures to combat the virus. Currently there are multiple variants of concern circulating around the world, for example Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta and Omicron.

How is it spread?

COVID-19 is spread mainly by:

- Breathing in air when close to an infected person who is exhaling small droplets and particles that contain the virus
- Having these small droplets and particles that contain virus land on the eyes, nose, or mouth, especially through splashes and sprays like a cough or sneeze
- Touching eyes, nose, or mouth with hands that have the virus on them

What do I look for?

Individuals with any of the symptoms from the list below are recommended to self-isolate and follow public health advice:

- Fever (Temp 37.8C/100F or greater) and/or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Decrease or loss of taste or smell
- Extreme fatigue
- Muscle aches or joint pain
- Gastrointestinal symptoms
- Sore throat
- Runny nose or nasal congestion
- Headache

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If you require this information in an accessible format, contact 1-800-841-2729.



- Abdominal pain
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Decreased or lack of appetite

How can I get tested?

Individuals can find out if they are eligible for testing by visiting durham.ca and reviewing the [COVID-19 Testing](#) section.

If eligible, arrange testing at a [COVID-19 Testing Location](#).

COVID-19 Vaccines

For more information on COVID-19 vaccines including vaccine eligibility and where to get vaccinated, visit durham.ca/covidvaccines.

How can I protect myself?

Follow these steps to help protect yourself and others from COVID-19:

- wear the best quality mask available
- get [vaccinated for COVID-19](#)
- stay 2 metres away from others
- avoid contact with people who are sick
- avoid crowds and poorly ventilated spaces
- wash your hands often with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- cover coughs and sneezes
- avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth
- stay home and [self-isolate](#) if you are sick

For information about COVID-19 visit www.durham.ca/CovidInfoHub

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