

## **Coronavirus Frequently Asked Questions** **Updated 03/13/2020**

As you are aware, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is responding to an outbreak of respiratory disease caused by coronavirus (COVID-19). It was first detected in Wuhan, China and has now been detected on six continents. The cases within the United States initially began with imported cases of COVID-19 in travelers. Person-to-person spread of COVID-19 has also been seen among close contacts of return travelers from China. To date there has been one case of community spread in California, meaning people have been infected and it is not known how or where they became exposed.

As this is a constantly changing situation, visit the CDC website, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus>, for up-to-date information.

To help you better understand what's happening and cut through the confusion, Cooper Clinic physicians have compiled a list of frequently asked questions to provide you with relevant and valuable information.

### **What is coronavirus (COVID-19)?**

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus causing COVID-19 is the coronavirus first identified in Wuhan, China.

### **How does COVID-19 spread?**

The virus that causes COVID-19 probably emerged from an animal source, but it now seems to be spreading from person to person. At this time, it is unclear how easily or sustainably the virus that causes COVID-19 is spreading between people. Virus specimens have been detected in upper and lower respiratory tract specimens. It is likely that it is spread through respiratory droplets when a person coughs or sneezes.

### **What are the symptoms of COVID-19?**

Reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms can include fever, cough and shortness of breath. The large majority of patients have mild symptoms of the disease.

### **What is the incubation period for COVID-19?**

Symptoms may appear in as few as 2 days or as long as 14 days after exposure.

## **How can I help protect myself?**

The best way to prevent infection is avoid being exposed to the virus. Simple, everyday preventive actions can help prevent the spread of COVID-19, which include:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

## **What should I do if I recently traveled to an area with COVID-19?**

COVID-19 is now reported in six continents. A majority of the cases are in China. Other areas with larger outbreaks include Japan, South Korea, Italy and Iran. If you have been in these areas in the past 14 days and feel sick with fever, cough or difficulty breathing, you should contact your medical provider and report your travel and symptoms. You will be given instructions on how to get care without exposing other people to your illness.

## **What should I do if I think I have COVID-19?**

Contact your primary care physician immediately. Cooper Clinic Platinum patients should contact their Platinum team immediately via phone or text. DO NOT come to Cooper Clinic. We will be utilizing three hospitals in the Dallas area that are ready to accept and treat COVID-19 patients. These hospitals include Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital Dallas, Baylor University Medical Center and Medical City Dallas. Each has protocols and facilities ready to combat infectious disease.

## **Can you test for COVID-19 at Cooper Clinic?**

**No.** At this time, diagnostic testing for COVID-19 can only be conducted at CDC and our local health departments. Dallas County, Tarrant County and Collin County health departments can now perform testing. CDC also has an emergency operations center and will assist local hospitals and health departments to collect, store and ship specimens appropriately to the CDC, including after hours and on weekends/holidays.

## **Is there a vaccine?**

There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus.

## **How is COVID-19 treated?**

Most patients with COVID-19 will not require medical supportive care. Clinical management for hospital patients with COVID-19 is to focus on supportive care of complications. There are currently no antiviral drugs licensed by the FDA to treat COVID-19. Some studies suggest potential therapeutic activity of some agents against COVID-19, but there is no available data from observational studies or controlled trials in humans to support recommending investigational therapeutics at this time.

## **Should post-exposure prophylaxis be used for people who have been exposed to COVID-19?**

There are currently no FDA-approved post-exposure medications for people who have been exposed. Having antibiotics or Tamiflu on hand is not recommended.

## **Should I wear a mask?**

A face mask should be used by people who have COVID-19 and are showing symptoms. This is to protect others from the risk of getting infected. For those who are *not* sick or showing symptoms, CDC does *not* recommend wearing a mask.

## **What should I do if I have upcoming travel plans?**

We do not recommend traveling to areas where a large number of COVID-19 cases are reported including China, South Korea, Japan, Italy and Singapore. Currently, CDC and the State Department are warning against cruise ship travel, especially in elderly patients and those with chronic medical conditions. In addition, CDC has recommended at-risk populations (elderly and those with chronic medical diseases) avoid plane travel when possible, large crowded venues and venues with poor circulation. It's important to stay level headed about the situation, but also vigilant. *Your health is our number one priority.*

If you must travel, ensure you have all pertinent health information, such as your medication list and list of medical diagnoses when pertinent. In addition, you should check the status of medication refills to ensure you have plenty on hand.

## **What supplies do I need?**

We recommend Tylenol, anti-inflammatory medications such as Advil or Motrin, Mucinex and decongestants such as Sudafed.