

## Fact Sheet

### Coronavirus (COVID-19)

#### Can African Americans become infected with COVID-19?

Absolutely Yes! There is now data that shows that African Americans are disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

For example:

- Louisiana released data showing that while African-Americans only make up roughly 32% of the population they account for 70% of the deaths in the state.
- In Michigan, African-Americans have died at more than eight times the rate of white people despite making up only 14% of the state's population.
- In Illinois, 58% of Cook County deaths from COVID-19 were African Americans though the population is 23% African American, and 72% of Chicago deaths were African American patients though the city is 32% African American.
- The CDC released some data that suggested that African American populations were disproportionately affected by COVID-19. According to the CDC, even though the racial breakdown from the population in their report was 18% African American, 33% of hospitalized coronavirus patients were African American. (abcnews.go.com) Coronavirus Health and Science.

#### What is Coronavirus?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses, which may cause illness in animals or humans. In humans, several coronaviruses are known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). The most recently discovered coronavirus causes coronavirus disease COVID-19.

#### What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus. This new virus and disease were unknown before the outbreak began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019.

#### How does COVID-19 spread?

People can catch COVID-19 from others who have the virus. The disease can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth that are spread when a person with COVID-19 coughs or sneezes. These droplets land on objects and surfaces around the person. Other people then catch COVID-19 by touching these objects or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose or mouth. People can also catch COVID-19 if they breathe in droplets from a person with COVID-19 who coughs out or sneezes droplets. This is why it is important to stay at least 6 feet away from a person who is sick.

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

The “incubation period” means the time between catching the virus and beginning to have symptoms of the disease. Most estimates of the incubation period for COVID-19 range from 1-14 days, most commonly around five days. These estimates are being updated as more data become available.

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

COVID-19 symptoms include:

- Cough
- Fever
- Tiredness
- Shortness of breath
- Muscle aches
- Sore throat
- Nasal congestion
- Runny nose
- Loss of taste or smell
- Diarrhea
- Headache

Research shows that in some rare cases, COVID-19 can lead to severe respiratory problems, kidney failure or death.

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

COVID-19 is confirmed with a laboratory test.

## **Is there a vaccine, drug or treatment for COVID-19?**

Not yet. To date, there is no vaccine and no specific antiviral medicine to prevent or treat COVID-19. However, those affected should receive care to relieve symptoms. People with serious illness should be hospitalized. Most patients recover thanks to supportive care.

Possible vaccines and some specific drug treatments are under investigation. They are being tested through clinical trials. The World Health Organization is coordinating efforts to develop vaccines and medicines to prevent and treat COVID-19.

## **Does COVID-19 cause death?**

Yes. However, 411,836 people have recovered from the illness. According to the Coronavirus COVID-19 Global Cases Map developed by the Johns Hopkins Center for Systems Science and Engineering, as of April 12, 2020, 109,823 deaths have been attributed to COVID-19. In the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) as of April 12, 2020, Total Cases of COVID-19: 525,704 and Total Deaths: 20,486.

## **How do you protect yourself from COVID-19?**

Practice good hygiene, respiratory etiquette and social and physical distancing.

The following are more ways to protect yourself:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially if you've been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- If soap and water is not available use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid close contact with people (stay at least 6 feet apart)
- Stay home as much as possible
- Cover your mouth and face with a mask or cloth face cover
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, sinks, etc.

## **Who is most at risk for COVID-19?**

People of all ages can be infected by the new coronavirus. However, the following people are more vulnerable:

- African Americans
- Adults age 60 and beyond
- People with pre-existing medical conditions
- People with Asthma
- People with Diabetes
- People with heart disease
- People with HIV
- People with Disabilities
- People experiencing homelessness
- Pregnant Women and women breastfeeding

## **Sources:**

[Abcnews.go.com](http://abcnews.go.com)

[Who.int](http://who.int)

[CDC.gov](http://cdc.gov)

[Hopkinsmedicine.org](http://Hopkinsmedicine.org)