

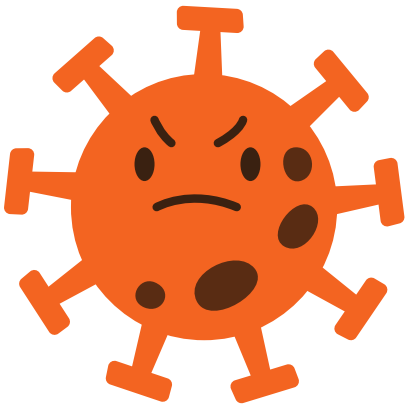


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for every child

RESPONSES

TO MYTHS, RUMORS,
CONCERNS & QUESTIONS
OF PEOPLE ON COVID19

What is a 'novel' coronavirus?



A novel coronavirus (CoV) is a new strain of coronavirus. The disease caused by the novel coronavirus, first identified in Wuhan, China, has been named coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) – 'CO' stands for corona, 'VI' for virus, and 'D' for disease. Formerly, this disease was referred to as '2019 novel coronavirus' or '2019-nCoV.'

The COVID-19 virus is a new virus linked to the same family of viruses as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and some types of influenza (flu) or common cold.

How does the COVID-19 virus spread?



The virus is transmitted through direct contact with respiratory droplets of an infected person (generated through coughing and sneezing), and touching surfaces contaminated with the virus. The COVID-19 virus may survive on surfaces for several hours, but simple disinfectants can kill it.

What are the symptoms of coronavirus?

Symptoms can include fever, cough and shortness of breath. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia or breathing difficulties. More rarely, the disease can be fatal.

These symptoms are similar to the flu (influenza) or the common cold, which are a lot more common than COVID-19. This is why testing is required to confirm if someone has COVID-19. It's important to remember that key prevention measures are the same – frequent hand washing, and respiratory hygiene (cover your cough or sneeze with a flexed elbow or tissue, then throw away the tissue into a closed bin). Also, there is a vaccine for the flu – so remember to keep yourself and your child up to date with vaccinations.

symptoms



How can a person avoid the risk of infection?



Here are precautions you and your family can take to avoid infection:

- Wash your hands frequently using soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub
- Cover your mouth and nose with a flexed elbow or tissue, when coughing or sneezing, and throw away the tissue into a closed bin
- Avoid close contact with anyone who has cold or flu-like symptoms
- Keep at least 1 meter between you and others
- Do not give hugs nor handshakes for salutation
- Stay home
- Avoid touching your face, essentially your eyes, nose and mouth since these are entry points to your body and can lead to contagion
- If you sneeze or cough do it into your elbow (not your hand).
- Do not use handkerchief because virus can remain in it creating a possible source of contagion.
- If using a disposable tissue, throw it in garbage immediately
- Go to the doctor if you have a fever, cough or feel that it is difficult to breathe



Common rumors/myths, concerns and questions about Coronavirus collected by IRC and UNICEF zonal offices

- Fear of going to the hospital as some have heard that those who die will be burned afterwards.
- The government is wrapping up those who die from the virus in nylon, covering them in lime, and using an excavator to bury them in a central location – Going against their religious beliefs.
- No need to seek medical attention at health facilities as the capacity or resources needed to treat patients are non-existent.
- People believe that if they go to hospitals, they will be placed in wards with infected patients despite having other or no symptoms.
- In order to save other's lives, even those suspected of having the virus will be injected with poison at health facilities. The same applies to Afghans diagnosed with the virus in Iran.
- Iranian hospitals are not accepting any Afghans.
- Doctors are not open to cooperate with patients, especially those coming from Iran. Simultaneously, those coming from Iran fear of being mistreated or stigmatized upon returning to Afghanistan.
- Some people believe that if they visit hospitals, doctors or news reporters will take their picture and upload it on social media – creating further shame for having the virus.
- According to the message passed by some Mullahs, the only thing people needs to do to stay safe is pray five times a day. As long as they wash their hands during the prayers, the virus will not be transmitted.
- Muslims will not be infected or are immune to the virus.
- Some Mullahs have said that the virus cannot be transmitted from person-to-person, as per the "Hadith."
- According to other Mullahs, the virus is an artificial claim coming from countries trying to prevent people from attending mosques and other religious events.
- Closing mosques will distance people from their faith.
- If the government closes down madrassas and mosques, the punishment from God will be more severe since during these times the only place where a person can be saved is either a mosque or a madrassa.
- Shouting "Allahu Akbar" will make the virus go away.
- The countries mostly affected by the coronavirus have limited religious beliefs.
- The virus has been caused by the US as part of a political game. Thus, the outbreak and high mortality rate only affects places like China, Iran, and Italy. As the US and Afghanistan have good relations, it will not affect the local people. It is just a game between global powers.
- It is believed that the type of virus seen in each country will vary depending on what was planned for that specific location.

- The virus only affects those countries near the ocean.
- Due to the extreme hot weather conditions, the virus will not affect the eastern region.
- For market sellers, the use of masks will result in lower sales or no one willing to buy from them.
- Burning wild rue (esfand) will kill the virus.
- Drinking black tea with a bit of salt while reading the six kalimas in the Quran will kill the virus. At the same time, drinking flaxseed with water will also help eliminate the virus.

In addition, fatalistic views among Afghans remain a major challenge. Many see the virus as inevitable, while others feel the virus will not make it far as locals grew up with numerous germs and bacteria.

- It is considered shame to be in quarantine.
- Religious texts will protect my family and me against the virus.
- Afghans and expose too much suffering, so cannot be affected by Coronavirus am.
- I am safe against coronavirus if only use what my religion tells me about hygiene.
- Some of the home treatments such as using herbs are useful to treat an infected person.
- Getting infected by COVID19 considered a bad thing like getting infected by HIV.
- The doctors and health staff will kill the infected people to reduce the separation of the virus.
- Coronavirus is a political game to stop people from going to mosques and avoid handshake and hugging to increase hater among Muslims.
- A person said, bring coronavirus patient to hand shank and hug, I cannot be infected.



Questions and Answers to address rumors/ myths and concerns (Treatment and Care)

Question?

If someone dies in hospital what the hospital is going to do with the dead body?

Answer: If a patient dies in hospital, the hospital follows their routine infection prevention and control precautions when handling a decedent who died of COVID. The dignity of the dead, their cultural and religious traditions, and their families are respected and protected throughout.

The safety and well-being of everyone who attends to bodies should be the priority. Before attending to a body, people should ensure that the necessary hand hygiene and personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies are available.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#COVID-19-and-Funerals>

Question?

If I have a non-corona medical condition, should I be placed in a separate ward or with Corona affected patients?

Answer: There are separate hospitals and centers for Coronavirus positive patients in different provinces. People with other medical conditions will not be put together in Coronavirus patients' hospitals or wards.

Question?

If I think I have Corona should I go to the hospitals or clinics considering treatment capacity?

Answer: Stay home in separate room away from other family members if you have only fever, cough and body ach and follow below preventive measures. When you have difficulty in breathing and your condition worse please contact medical staff and follow their advice.

- Wash your hands frequently using soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub
- Cover your mouth and nose with a flexed elbow or tissue, when coughing or sneezing, and throw away the tissue into a closed bin
- Do not give hugs nor handshakes for salutation
- Stay home
- Avoid touching your face, essentially your eyes, nose and mouth since these are entry points to your body and can lead to contagion
- If you sneeze or cough do it into your elbow (not your hand).
- Go to the doctor if you have a fever, cough or feel that it is difficult to breathe

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Question?

Will the doctor cooperate with patients with Coronavirus specially those coming from Iran?

Answer: Sure. Every patient deserves respect and dignity in all conditions. The medical team are there to help patients and their responsibility to provide equal services to all . Doctors do not discriminate while curing patients.

Question?

If I am admitted in the hospital, do the doctors and reporters take my pictures and post in social media?

Answer: Based on medical ethics medical staff are not allowed to disclose privacy of the patients. So, the medical staff are not allowed to take patients' photos. They only collect information for medical record not for posting in social media. News reporters cannot take patients photos and post in media without consent of the patients. It's your right not to allow anyone to take your picture. If your photo is shared by a medical professional on social media platforms, please report to Director of Hospital or call 166.

Question?

How should I behave or interact with a person returned from Iran to Afghanistan?

Answer: Displaced and migrant children, adolescents, women and men and families are likely among the worst affected, let's protect them by helping them to be safe and healthy. The returnees should be advised to stay home separately from other family members for 14 days and seek medical support if they are suffering from difficulty in breathing if they have corona in case.

Question?

Is it enough to only wash my hands during ablution for prayers? How often should I wash my hands?

Answer: Wash your hands as much as possible. In addition to washing your hands for prayers, WASH them after and before meals, using toilet, touching surfaces, after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

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Question?

Some people think virus cannot be transmitted from person to person. How does coronaviruses spread?

Answer: The virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly from person to person, mainly through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. Spread is more likely when people are in close contact with one another (at least one meter).

Question?

Why gatherings are not recommended during quarantine.? Why gatherings are not recommended?

Answer: COVID-19 seems to be spreading easily and sustainably in the community (“community spread”) in many affected geographic areas.

When COVID-19 is spreading in your area, everyone should limit close contact with individuals outside your household in indoor and outdoor spaces. Since people can spread the virus before they know they are sick. It is important to stay away from others when possible, even if you have no symptoms.

Keeping space between you and others is one of the best tools to avoid being exposed to this virus and slowing its spread locally and across the country and world.

Question?

How the virus can be prevented?

Answer:

- Wash your hands frequently using soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub
- Cover your mouth and nose with a flexed elbow or tissue, when coughing or sneezing, and throw away the tissue into a closed bin
- Avoid close contact with anyone who has cold or flu-like symptoms
- Keep at least 1 meter between you and others
- Do not give hugs nor handshakes for salutation
- Stay home
- Avoid touching your face, essentially your eyes, nose and mouth since these are entry points to your body and can lead to contagion
- If you sneeze or cough do it into your elbow (not your hand).
- Go to the doctor if you have a fever, cough or feel that it is difficult to breathe

Question?

Some people think, muslim countries cannot be affected by Coronavirus? Which countries are affected by Coronavirus?

Answer: From the evidence so far, the COVID-19 virus can be transmitted in ALL AREAS, including muslim and non-muslim countries. The virus has spread in Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Afghanistan and other Islamic countries. We are all vulnerable to get the virus, regardless of race, religion, age or gender.

Question?

**Some people think hot weather stop spread of Coronavirus disease?
Can hot weather stop spread of Coronavirus?**

Answer: From the evidence so far, the COVID-19 virus can be transmitted in ALL AREAS, including areas with hot and humid weather. You can catch COVID-19, no matter how sunny or hot the weather is. Countries with hot weather have reported cases of COVID-19. To protect yourself, make sure you clean your hands frequently and thoroughly and avoid touching your eyes, mouth, and nose.

Regardless of climate, adopt protective measures if you live in, or travel to an area reporting COVID-19. The best way to protect yourself against COVID-19 is by frequently cleaning your hands. By doing this you eliminate viruses that may be on your hands and avoid infection that could occur by then touching your eyes, mouth, and nose.

Question?

**Some people think esfand (wild rue) kills the virus. Is the virus killed
by wild rue (Esfand)**

Answer: There is no evidence to confirm that burning plants, including burning wild rue (esfand), could eliminate the virus. To protect yourself, make sure you clean your hands frequently and thoroughly and avoid touching your eyes, mouth, and nose. Handwashing with soap and keeping a physical distance of at least 1 m (or one person's length) are the number one steps recommended by health professionals to protect individuals and help prevent spreading the virus to others.

Question?

Does drinking black tea prevent spread of coronavirus?

Answer: There is currently no evidence to prove that black tea or other liquids can prevent coronavirus. At this stage, it is important to take precautions and actions to prevent the spread of the virus. To protect yourself, make sure you clean your hands frequently and thoroughly and avoid touching your eyes, mouth, and nose. Handwashing with soap and keeping a physical distance of 1 m are the number one steps recommended by health professionals to protect individuals and help prevent spreading the virus to others.

Question?

Drinking flaxseed, (Khaksher) with water will also help eliminate the virus.

Answer: Answer: No. There is no evidence that flaxseed and water will kill virus.

Question?

Some people think Afghans have grown up with bacteria and viruses and cannot be affected by viruses?

Answer: More than 1000 Afghans are affected by Coronavirus so far which means every one of us can be affected by coronavirus disease.

Question?

Are religious places safe against the virus?

Answer: Now community spread of Coronavirus is existed in all regions and the virus could be transmitted from a person to another in any place. People can spread the virus before they know they are sick, it is important to stay away from others when possible, even if you have no symptoms. Even Kabba and Masjid Nabawi have been limited to people in order to prevent spread of the disease.

Question?

Is it a shame to be in quarantine?

Answer: No, it is not shame. Everyone can be infected by virus Being in quarantine is useful measure to protect your family and friends.

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Question?

Since I am an Afghan and already exposed to other related viruses and infections, am I safe against getting infected?

Answer: The virus will infect any people regardless of their age, gender, background, and beliefs. Follow all the recommendations in order to be safe from virus.

Question?

Are some of the home treatments such as using herbs useful to treat an infected person?

Answer: Currently, there is no evidence that herbs could help with treatment of COVID-19. It's recommended to strictly maintain personal hygiene and social distancing and eat a healthy diet to enhance immunity. If symptoms are more severe, please seek medical care as soon as possible.

Question?

If I am diagnosed with COVID, is it a shame?

Answer: Getting infected by Coronavirus is not a shame. We are all vulnerable to get the virus, regardless of race, religion, age or gender.

Question?

Will the doctors and health care staff kill the infected people to reduce the separation of the virus?

Answer: No, the medical staff does not have the right to kill someone. It is against government law and medical law to kill a sick person. Medical staff are there to help sick people.

Question?

Some people think coronavirus is a political game to stop people attending mosques and avoid handshake and hugging to increase hater among Muslims.

Answer: Staying home and avoid handshaking are to stop community spread of the disease and not to infect more people. They are temporary measures till corona spread is stopped.

COVID-19 comes from eating the meat of animals, which are forbidden, since Muslims do not eat those types of meat, they will not be affected.

Based current evidence, the virus is being transmitted from person to person. Follow below recommendations:

- Wash your hands frequently using soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub
- Cover your mouth and nose with a flexed elbow or tissue, when coughing or sneezing, and throw away the tissue into a closed bin
- Avoid close contact with anyone who has cold or flu-like symptoms
- Keep at least 1 meter between you and others
- Do not give hugs nor handshakes for salutation
- Stay home
- Avoid touching your face, essentially your eyes, nose and mouth since these are entry points to your body and can lead to contagion
- If you sneeze or cough do it into your elbow (not your hand).
- Go to the doctor if you have a fever, cough or feel that it is difficult to breath

Question?

Limiting people from going to mosques will distance people from their faith?

Answer: It is temporary measure to avoid community spread of disease from one person to another. People can spread the virus before they know they are sick, it is important to stay away from others when possible, even if you have no symptoms.

Question?

Can regularly rinsing your nose with saline help prevent infection with the new coronavirus?

Answer: No. There is no evidence that regularly rinsing the nose with saline has protected people from infection with the new coronavirus.

Question?

I am Pregnant. How can I protect myself against COVID-19?

Answer: Pregnant women should take the same precautions to avoid COVID-19 infection as other people.

You can help protect yourself by:

- Washing your hands frequently with an alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.
- Keeping space between yourselves and others.
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Practicing respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately.

If you have fever, cough or difficulty breathing, seek medical care early. Call before going to a health facility and follow the directions of your local health authority.

Pregnant women and women who have recently delivered – including those affected by COVID-19 – should attend their routine care appointment.

Question?

What care should be available during pregnancy and delivery under COVID-19 situation?

Answer: All pregnant women, including those with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infections, have the right to high quality care before, during and after birth. This includes antenatal, PNC, newborn and mental health care. A safe and positive childbirth experience includes:

- Being treated with respect and dignity;
- Having a companion of choice present during delivery;
- Clear communication by maternity staff;
- Appropriate pain relief strategies;
- Mobility in labor where possible, and birth position of choice.

If COVID-19 is suspected or confirmed, health workers should take appropriate precautions to reduce risks of infection to themselves and others, including appropriate use of protective clothing.

Question?

Can women with COVID -19 Breast feed?

Answer: Yes. Women with COVID-19 can breastfeed if they wish to do so. They should:

- Practice respiratory hygiene during feeding, wearing a mask where available;
- Wash hands before and after touching the baby;
- Routinely clean and disinfect surfaces they have touched

Question?

Can I touch or hold my newborn baby if I have COVID -19?

Answer: Yes. Close contact and early, exclusive breastfeeding help a baby to thrive. You should be supported to:

Breastfeed safely, with good respiratory hygiene;

- Hold your newborn skin-to-skin, and
- Share a room with your baby

You should wash your hands before and after touching your baby and keep all surfaces clean.

I have COVID-19 and am too unwell to breastfeed my baby directly. What can I do?

If you are too unwell to breastfeed your baby due to COVID-19 or other complications, you should be supported to safely provide your baby with breastmilk in a way possible, available, and acceptable to you.

This could include:

- Expressing milk;
- Re-lactation;
- Donor human milk.

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