

## COVID-19: Myths Versus Facts

### Myths about social distancing

**Myth:** *If I am outdoors, I do not need to practice social distancing.*

**Fact:** While it is less likely that you will catch COVID-19 in open areas, it is still important to stay at least 6 feet away from others. Some people with COVID-19 have no symptoms and can spread the disease through respiratory droplets.

**Myth:** *It's OK if I go have a cup of coffee with my neighbor, or my teenager visits a friend, or my child has a play date with a friend – just this once.*

**Fact:** Social distancing only works if everyone stays within their immediate household circles. Exposing yourself to even one additional person increases transmission risk.

**Myth:** *Wearing a cloth face covering/mask will keep me safe if I am around anyone who has COVID-19.*

**Fact:** Cloth face coverings are recommended in public because they can prevent people who have COVID-19 — possibly without any symptoms — from passing it along to others. They do not block out viruses.

**Myth:** *If I and everyone around me are wearing cloth face coverings, there's no need to practice social distancing.*

**Fact:** Cloth face coverings are NOT a replacement for social distancing. Whenever you are outside your home or around anyone outside your immediate household circle, you should stay 6 feet away from others.

### Myths about Ohio Stay at Home order

**Myth:** *The order's provisions are voluntary and not required.*

**Fact:** The order is enforceable by law enforcement and violations can carry a misdemeanor penalty of a fine up to \$750 and/or up to 90 days in jail.

**Myth:** *The Ohio National Guard is enforcing the order.*

**Fact:** The Ohio National Guard has not been activated to enforce the order. However, guard members are helping with food bank distribution, planning for an expected need in medical care supplies, and providing medical services to inmates in the Federal Correctional Institution in Elkton in northeast Ohio. They are not

armed.

**Myth:** *The state is going to close grocery stores and pharmacies.*

**Fact:** Grocery stores and pharmacies are considered “essential” businesses in the Stay at Home order and will not be closed.

**Myth:** *I have to cancel my wedding or get married without my family present.*

**Fact:** Weddings are exempt from the 10-person-limit on gatherings. However, wedding receptions are **not** exempt. It is recommended, but not mandated, that weddings be postponed or limited to as few people as possible.

**Myth:** *I cannot hold a funeral for a loved one.*

**Fact:** Funerals are exempt from the 10-person-limit on gatherings. It is recommended, but not mandated, that memorial services be postponed or limited to as few people as possible.

### **Myths about other orders, mandates, and recommendations**

**Myth:** *The order’s provisions are voluntary and not required.*

**Fact:** The order is enforceable by law enforcement and violations can carry a misdemeanor penalty of a fine up to \$750 and/or up to 90 days in jail.

**Myth:** *The primary vote has been postponed until June 2, 2020.*

**Fact:** An initial recommendation was to postpone the primary to June 2. However, the legislature has instead extended mail-in voting to April 28, 2020. There will be no polling locations operating on that day.

**Myth:** *Ohio will be letting scores of inmates out of prison due to the pandemic.*

**Fact:** Fewer than 170 prison inmates, none of them convicted of serious charges, are being considered for early release. The inmates either have 90 days or fewer remaining on their sentences; or are 60 or older, suffering from one or more chronic health conditions, and have served more than half of their sentences and meet similar criteria to the list above.

### **Myths about who gets COVID-19 and transmission**

**Myth:** *Young people do not get COVID-19, only older people and people with other medical conditions are a risk.*

**Fact:** Older adults and people with serious chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of serious illness. But anyone can become sick, and symptoms can range from mild to severe regardless of how old you are or if you have other medical conditions.

**Myth:** *African Americans cannot get COVID-19.*

**Fact:** People of all races, ethnicities, and backgrounds, and of all ages and genders, can get COVID-19.

For more information, visit: [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov).

**Myth:** *I have to be exposed to someone for several minutes to catch the virus that causes COVID-19.*

**Fact:** You can catch the virus from the respiratory droplets of someone who has it regardless of how long you are near them.

**Myth:** *If I go to a hospital for another reason, I will get COVID-19.*

**Fact:** Hospitals in Ohio are taking precautions and using provisions to separate patients with COVID-19 from other patients. Before going to a hospital, contact your doctor for guidance on your specific situation.

**Myth:** *Coronavirus spreads on food.*

**Fact:** Coronaviruses are generally thought to be spread from person to person through respiratory droplets. Currently, there is no evidence to support transmission of COVID-19 associated with food. It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object, like a packaging container, that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. In general, because of poor survivability of these coronaviruses on surfaces, there is likely very low risk of spread from food products or packaging.

**Myth:** *COVID-19 cannot be transmitted in areas with hot and humid climates.*

**Fact:** Evidence so far indicates that COVID-19 can be transmitted in all areas, including areas with hot and humid weather.

**Myth:** *I can get COVID-19 from my pet.*

**Fact:** At this time, there is no evidence that companion animals, including pets, can spread COVID-19 to people or that they might be a source of infection in the United States. To date, CDC has not received any reports of pets becoming sick with COVID-19 in the United States.

**Myth:** *COVID-19 can be spread by mosquitoes.*

**Fact:** There has been no information or evidence to suggest that COVID-19 could be transmitted by mosquitoes. The respiratory virus spreads primarily through droplets from coughing or sneezing.

**Myth:** *The virus that causes COVID-19 was intentionally released by a government agency or other group.*

**Fact:** It is believed that the virus that causes COVID-19 has its origin in bats or another animal. The virus is from the coronavirus family, a large group of viruses that are common in people and many different animal species. Rarely, animal coronaviruses can infect people and then spread between people. Early on, many of the patients at the epicenter of the COVID-19 outbreak in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, had some link to a large seafood and live animal market, suggesting animal-to-person spread.

## **Myths about symptoms**

**Myth:** *If I have COVID-19, I'll know it.*

**Fact:** While some people get critically ill with COVID-19, many have no symptoms at all.

For more information, visit: [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov).

**Myth:** Having COVID-19 is just like having the flu.

**Fact:** The virus that causes COVID-19 can lead to some flu-like symptoms, such as aches, fever, and cough and both can also lead to pneumonia. However, COVID-19 is more serious and estimates show it has a much higher mortality rate than flu.

### **Myths about prevention and treatment**

**Myth:** Washing my hands with antibacterial soap will protect me more than regular soap.

**Fact:** When washing hands, you can use plain soap or antibacterial soap. Plain soap is as effective as antibacterial soap at removing germs.

**Myth:** I can make my own hand sanitizer at home.

**Fact:** The creation and use of homemade hand sanitizer is frowned upon over concerns regarding the correct use/concentration of ingredients and the need to work under sterile production conditions. Do not rely on “Do It Yourself” or “DIY” recipes, including those based solely on essential oils or formulated without correct compounding practices.

**Myth:** I can clean and disinfect frequently touched objects with hand sanitizer.

**Fact:** Use common, EPA-registered household disinfectants to clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces such as tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks. If surfaces are visibly dirty, clean with soap and water or detergent first.

**Myth:** Being in the sun or high temperatures prevents COVID-19.

**Fact:** Exposing yourself to the sun or to high temperatures DOES NOT prevent COVID-19. The disease can be spread no matter how sunny or hot the weather is.

**Myth:** Regularly rinsing my nose with saline or gargling with saltwater can help prevent COVID-19.

**Fact:** There is no evidence that regularly rinsing the nose with saline or gargling with water protects people from infection with viruses that cause COVID-19 or other respiratory infections.

**Myth:** Spraying alcohol, chlorine, or another disinfectant all over my body will kill COVID-19.

**Fact:** Spraying alcohol, chlorine, or another disinfectant all over your body will not kill viruses that have already entered your body. Spraying such substances can be harmful to clothes or mucous membranes such as those in the eyes and mouth.

For additional information, visit [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov).

For answers to your COVID-19 questions, call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634).

If you or a loved one are experiencing anxiety related to the coronavirus pandemic, help is available. Call the Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990 (1-800-846-8517 TTY); connect with a trained counselor through the Ohio Crisis Text

For more information, visit: [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov).

Line by texting the keyword "4HOPE" to 741 741; or call the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services help line at 1-877-275-6364 to find resources in your community.

# CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 **Ohio** | Department of Health

Protect yourself and others from COVID-19 by taking these precautions.

## PREVENTION

For additional information call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH or visit [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov).



STAY HOME



PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING



GET ADEQUATE SLEEP AND EAT WELL-BALANCED MEALS



WASH HANDS OFTEN WITH WATER AND SOAP (20 SECONDS OR LONGER)



DRY HANDS WITH A CLEAN TOWEL OR AIR DRY YOUR HANDS



COVER YOUR MOUTH WITH A TISSUE OR SLEEVE WHEN COUGHING OR SNEEZING



AVOID TOUCHING YOUR EYES, NOSE, OR MOUTH WITH UNWASHED HANDS OR AFTER TOUCHING SURFACES



CLEAN AND DISINFECT "HIGH-TOUCH" SURFACES OFTEN



CALL BEFORE VISITING YOUR DOCTOR



PRACTICE GOOD HYGIENE HABITS

For more information, visit: [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov).