

LEAVENWORTH COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Frequently Asked Questions About COVID-19

1. What is COVID-19?

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus that was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in China.

2. How Does COVID-19 spread?

The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It also may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose or possibly the eyes.

3. Why doesn't the Leavenworth County Health Department (LCHD) report where COVID-19 positive patients live, what City they live in or the names of these patients?

The LCHD is mandated to protect the health privacy rules standards as defined in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act along with other patient confidentiality laws and ethical standards. For this reason, the LCHD provides information directed at the number of people tested and confirmed cases within Leavenworth County.

The reality is, this disease is in our County and being spread from one person to another. The location of where COVID-19 positive patients live or who they are is a moot point. As a community, we must take the precautions of social distancing, remaining home and not being in contact with others seriously.

A dashboard developed by Johns Hopkins University presents the COVID-19 outbreak using data from the Centers for Disease Control and the World Health Organization:

<https://gisanddata.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/bda7594740fd40299423467b48e9ecf6>

4. What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- These symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure.**

5. If you develop emergency warning signs for COVID-19 get medical attention Immediately. Emergency warning signs include:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to stimulate
- Bluish lips or face

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6. What are the severe complications from the Virus?

Some patients have pneumonia in both lungs, multi-organ failure and in some cases death.

7. Is there a vaccine or treatment?

There is currently no vaccine and no specific treatment for this disease. People infected with COVID-19 can seek medical care to help relieve symptoms.

8. How can I help protect myself?

The best way to prevent the infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus. However, you should follow these everyday actions to help prevent the spread of this virus:

- Wash your hands often and correctly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people especially people who are sick.
- Cover your cough and sneeze with a tissue, then throw in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in your home, vehicle or other areas that are frequently contacted by people.

9. What cleaning products should I use?

Community members can practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces (for example: tables, doorknobs, light switches, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks) with household cleaners and EPA-registered product including precautions you should take when applying the products, such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the products. Caution is urged when mixing cleaning products due the some will react in a manner that can make you ill. See the following link from the CDC:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>

10. What to do if you get sick?

If you get sick with fever (100.4 or higher), cough, or have trouble breathing:

- First, call your healthcare provider and explain your symptoms. It is important to call ahead to the facility and tell them your situation. They will give you instructions on how to get care without exposing other people to your illness. If you don't have a primary care provider please call the Leavenworth County Health Department (913) 250-2000.
- Avoid all contact with other people including family members if possible
- Stay home!
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue
- Clean and disinfect frequently.

11. When can Essential Employers allow employees to or recovering from COVID-19 to work?

Essential Employers should allow employees exposed to or recover from COVID-19, to work under the following conditions:

- Employees who have been contacts to confirmed or suspected cases who are without symptoms should work. Employees with confirmed or suspected Covid-19 who have maintained isolation for at least 7 days after illness onset and have been at least 72 hours fever-free with other symptoms improving may work.
- Employees who are asymptomatic contacts of confirmed or suspected cases should self-monitor twice a day (temperature, symptoms), and undergo temperature monitoring and symptom checks at the beginning of each shift and at least every 12 hours.
- If employees who are asymptomatic contacts working under these conditions develop symptoms consistent with Covid-19, they should immediately stop work and isolate at home. All employees with symptoms consistent with Covid-19 should be dealt with as if they have this infection regardless of the availability of test results.

12. How do I get tested for COVID-19?

For testing information please call your healthcare provider or the Leavenworth County Health Department 913-250-2000. Your healthcare provider will need to determine whether or not you need to be tested.

Testing is not available for everyone. While testing is still available in Leavenworth County testing is reserved for those who meet specific symptomology criteria. As more cases are identified and spread into the community becomes visible, testing will not be a factor to determine the disease. Patients will be considered presumptive positive if they are exhibiting signs and symptoms associated with COVID-19 and tests will not be conducted unless admitted into a hospital. The reality is, if you are sick with the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 the best advice is to remain home and recover as you would with any other illness.

13. What is the difference between Isolation and quarantine?

Isolation	Quarantine
To separate ill persons who have a communicable disease from those who do not have that disease	To separate and restrict the movement of well persons who may have been exposed to a communicable disease
Restricts the movement of ill persons to help stop the spread of certain diseases	Monitor to see if they become ill
Example: Isolation for patients with infectious tuberculosis (TB)	These people may have been exposed to a disease and do not know it, or they may have the disease but do not show symptoms

For a more comprehensive list of frequently asked questions please visit the following Center for Disease Control and Prevention or the Kansas Department of Health and Environment:

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#anchor_1584387482747

<https://govstatus.egov.com/coronavirus>