

**REVIEWED***By Chris at 9:50 am, Apr 22, 2020*

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Situation Summary

Updated April 19, 2020

This is a rapidly evolving situation and CDC will provide updated information and guidance as it becomes available.

CDC is responding to a [pandemic](#) of respiratory disease [spreading](#) from person to person [coronavirus](#). The disease has been named “coronavirus disease 2019” (abbreviated “COVID-19”). The disease is a [serious public health risk](#). The federal government is working closely with state, local, tribal, and territorial public health partners, to [respond](#) to this situation. COVID-19 can cause [mild to severe illness](#) and [occurs in adults 65 years and older and people of any age with serious underlying medical conditions](#).

Situation in U.S.

Different parts of the country are seeing different levels of COVID-19 activity. The United States is in the [early exponential](#) [phase](#) of the pandemic. The duration and severity of each pandemic phase depends on the characteristics of the virus and the public health response.

- CDC and state and local public health laboratories are testing for the virus that causes COVID-19. View [CDC’s Public Health Laboratory Testing map](#).
- All 50 states have reported cases of COVID-19 to CDC.
- U.S. COVID-19 cases include:
 - People who were infected while travelling, before returning to the United States
 - People who were infected after having close contact with someone known to be infected
 - People in a community who were infected with the virus but don’t know how or where they were infected
- All U.S. states are reporting community spread of COVID-19.
- View latest [case counts](#), [deaths](#), [demographic characteristics](#), and a [map of states with the most cases](#).




For more information about COVID-19, contact a [state health department](#) or [local health](#)

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CDC Recommends

Everyone can do their part to help us respond to this emerging public health threat by following these recommendations:

- Wear a [cloth face covering](#) in public settings to avoid spreading COVID-19 to others if you do not have symptoms.
- The cloth face cover is meant to protect other people in case you are infected.
- The cloth face coverings recommended are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators. These supplies that should be reserved for healthcare workers and other first responders.
- The cloth face covering is not a substitute for social distancing.
- CDC continues to recommend that people try to keep about 6 feet between themselves.

The White House [“Slow the Spread” guidelines](#)   are in place until April 30. These are meant to slow the spread of COVID-19 through the use of social distancing at all levels of society. On April 20, the White House released [Guidelines for Opening Up America Again](#) , a phased approach to help state and local economies, get people back to work, and continue to protect American lives.

People who are sick

If you get a fever or cough, consider whether you might have COVID-19, depending on what you have done and other exposures. [All of the United States](#) is seeing some level of community spread of COVID-19. If you are [tested for COVID-19](#) by contacting a medical provider or health department, but it's important to get treatment for this virus. Most people who get the virus have mild illness and are able to recover with self-care.

People at higher risk for severe illness

People 65 years and older and people with serious [underlying medical conditions](#) should take extra [precautions](#) because they are at higher risk of developing severe COVID-19 illness.

Travelers

American citizens, lawful permanent residents, and their families who have been in one of the [restrictions for entering the United States](#) in the past 14 days will be allowed to enter the country and be redirected to one of 13 airports. After you return from one of these countries, you should follow CDC guidance for health.

All other international travelers, [please follow CDC instructions during this time](#). Your country is implementing an ongoing public health response to try to slow spread of this virus.

Healthcare Providers

If you are a healthcare provider, use your judgment to determine if a patient has signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and [whether the patient should be tested](#). CDC's [Criteria to Guide Evaluation and Testing for COVID-19](#) provides priorities for testing patients with suspected COVID-19 infection.

COVID-19 Background


COVID-19 is caused by a new coronavirus. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that infect many different species of animals, including camels, cattle, cats, and bats. Rarely, animals can be infected and then spread between people such as with [MERS-CoV](#), [SARS-CoV](#), and now with this new coronavirus.

The SARS-CoV-2 virus is a betacoronavirus, like MERS-CoV and SARS-CoV. All three of these viruses have been found in bats. The sequences from U.S. patients are similar to the one that China initially posted, suggesting the emergence of this virus from an animal reservoir.

Early on, many of the patients at the epicenter of the outbreak in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, had visited a seafood and live animal market, suggesting animal-to-person spread. Later, a growing number of patients did not have exposure to animal markets, indicating person-to-person spread. Person-to-person spread has been reported outside Hubei and in countries outside China, including in the [United States](#). More cases are [now being reported](#) with the virus that causes COVID-19, as does the United Kingdom. This means some people have been infected and it is not known how or where they became infected. There is [ongoing community spread of this coronavirus](#) that is causing COVID-19.

Severity

The complete clinical picture of COVID-19 is not fully known. Reported illnesses have ranged from mild (including some people with no reported symptoms) to severe, including illness resulting in death. We

suggests that the majority of COVID-19 illnesses are mild, [an early report](#)  out of China people who were infected. A [CDC Morbidity & Mortality Weekly Report that looked at severe COVID-19 patients in the United States](#) by age group found that 80% of deaths were among people with the highest percentage of severe outcomes occurring in people 85 years and older. For people with pre-existing medical conditions — like serious heart conditions, chronic lung disease, and diabetes, there is a higher risk of developing severe COVID-19 illness.

Related: [Symptoms Associated with COVID-19](#)

Risk Assessment

The risk posed by COVID-19 depends on characteristics of the virus, including how easily it spreads and the severity of resulting illness; and the medical or other measures available to control the impact (including vaccines or medications that can treat the illness) and the relative success of these. Because there are no specific treatments for COVID-19, [nonpharmaceutical interventions](#) become the most important risk reduction community interventions that can help reduce the impact of disease, like social distancing.

When considering the risk that COVID-19 poses to Americans, it's helpful to break down the risk by exposure and risk of serious illness and death.

Risk of exposure

- Cases of COVID-19 and instances of community spread are being reported in all states.
- People in places where ongoing community spread of the virus that causes COVID-19 is occurring are at elevated risk of exposure, with the level of their risk depending on their location.
- Healthcare workers caring for patients with COVID-19 are at elevated risk of exposure.
- Close contacts of persons with COVID-19 also are at elevated risk of exposure.
- Travelers returning from affected [international locations](#) where community spread is occurring are at elevated risk of exposure, with their level of risk depending on where they traveled.

Risk of severe illness

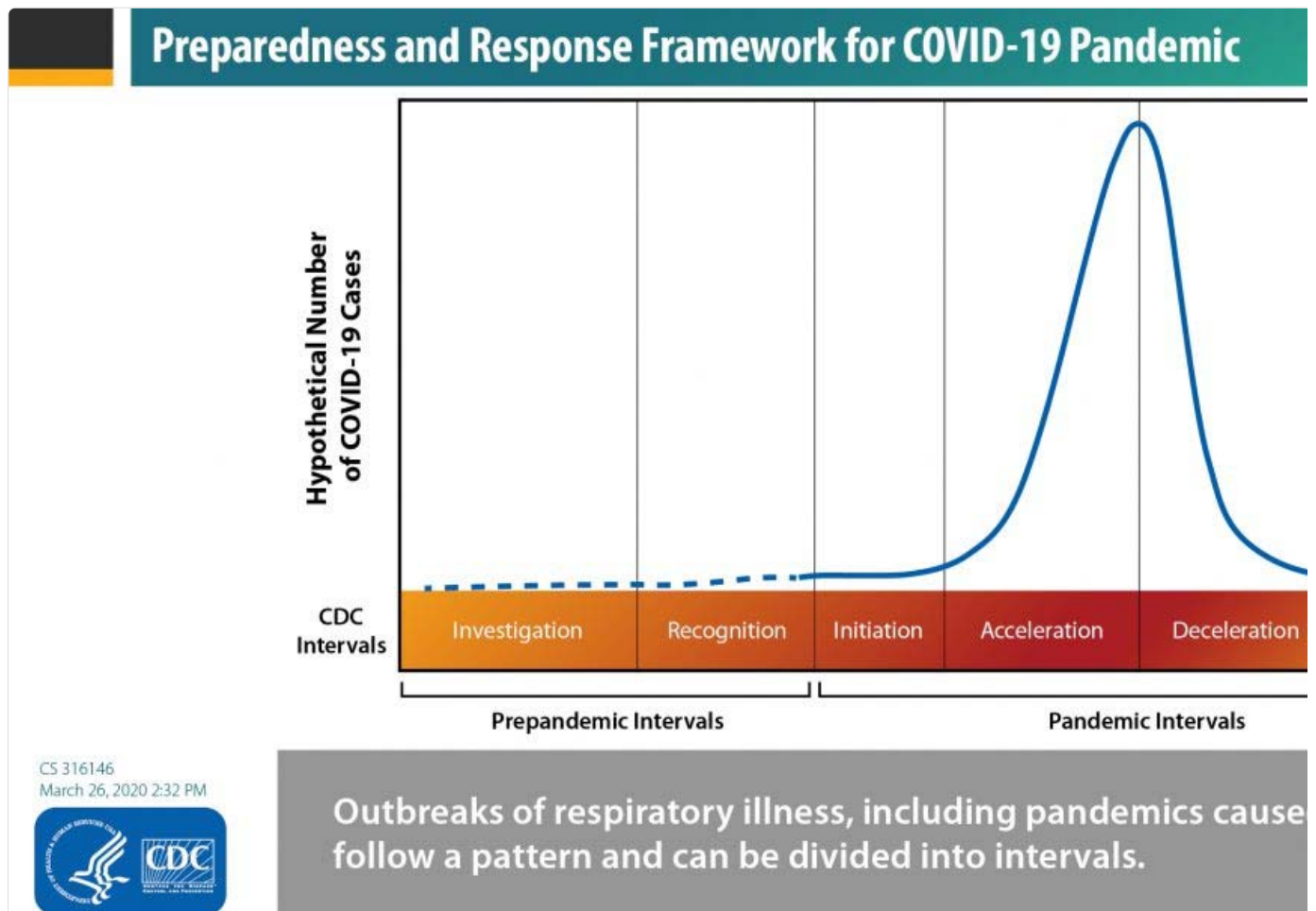
Based on what we know now, persons at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are:

- People 65 years and older
- People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility
- People of all ages with serious underlying medical conditions

CDC has developed [guidance to help individuals and healthcare providers assess the risk](#) people with potential community-related exposures to COVID-19.

COVID-19 Pandemic

A pandemic is a global outbreak of disease. Pandemics happen when a new virus emerge spread between people sustainably. Because there is little to no pre-existing immunity ag worldwide.



Source: CDC's "Updated Preparedness and Response Framework for Influenza Pande

The virus that causes COVID-19 is infecting people and spreading easily from person-to-p

COVID-19 outbreak was [characterized as a pandemic by the WHO](#) .

This is the first pandemic known to be caused by a new coronavirus. In the past century, it was caused by the emergence of new influenza viruses. As a result, most research and guidance is based on influenza, but the same premises can be applied to the current COVID-19 pandemic. Pandemics typically follow a certain progression outlined in a “[Pandemic Intervals Framework](#).” Pandemics are typically followed by recognition, initiation, and acceleration phases. The peak of illnesses occurs at the end of the acceleration phase, which is followed by a deceleration phase, during which there is a decrease in illness. The progression of the pandemic varies in different phases of the pandemic at any point in time and different parts of the same country experience different phases of a pandemic.

Related: [Confirmed COVID-19 Cases Global Map](#)

CDC Response

Global efforts at this time are focused concurrently on lessening the spread and impact of the virus. The U.S. government is working closely with state, local, tribal, and territorial partners, as well as public health officials, to respond to this public health threat.

View highlights of [CDC's response](#).

More Information

[World Health Organization, Coronavirus](#) 