

A message to those we serve

Amid the global coronavirus pandemic, and with confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Wisconsin, ProHealth Care is closely monitoring developments and adhering to guidelines established by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Our medical experts and leadership team have developed a thorough response plan designed to promote safety and meet the needs of our communities during this outbreak.

Answers to your questions about coronavirus

Q: What is coronavirus?

A: Human coronavirus infections are common, and most cause only mild to moderate illness. In late 2019, a new coronavirus called COVID-19 emerged in China and is spreading rapidly around the globe. Researchers are working to fully identify COVID-19's characteristics and develop a vaccine.

Q: What are the common symptoms of COVID-19?

A: The symptoms are similar to those caused by other viruses: fever, cough, muscle aches and shortness of breath. The vast majority of those who have been infected with this virus have not become seriously ill.

Q: Who is most vulnerable?

A: Older adults and those who have chronic health conditions like diabetes, heart disease or lung disease are at greatest risk for severe infection.

Q: Can children get this disease?

A: Yes. Children would appear to experience a milder form of infection, but can still infect others.

Q: What should I do if I develop symptoms?

A: Call your primary care provider if you:

- Have difficulty breathing, are dehydrated or are experiencing dizziness.
- Have been in close contact with a person who is known to have COVID-19.
- Have recently traveled to, or live in, an area with an outbreak of COVID-19.

Call your provider's office before making an appointment. Your provider will discuss with you whether you need to be seen in the office or tested for coronavirus. A virtual (video) visit may also be an option.

Q: How is the disease diagnosed?

A: COVID-19 is diagnosed in laboratories using special test kits approved by public health officials. For patients, the test involves a swab of the mouth and nose.

Q: Who is being tested for COVID-19?

A: ProHealth Care is following guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Testing is now available to people who meet the following criteria:

- Hospitalized patients.
- Older adults and those with chronic conditions or compromised immune systems.
- People who have had close contact with someone who has COVID-19 or is suspected of having the disease.
- People who have traveled to places where the disease is prevalent.



Q: What treatments are available for those who become ill with COVID-19?

A: There are no antiviral medications approved for treatment at this time. Most people experience only mild illness and are able to take care of themselves while remaining at home. Patients should get plenty of rest, drink fluids and take non-prescription pain or fever medication. Medical care is recommended for patients with progressive fever, dehydration or increasing cough or shortness of breath. In severe cases, hospitalization may be required.

If you become ill with COVID-19, it is important that you stay at home so that you do not spread the disease to others. Do not go to work, school or elsewhere in public. Your health care provider, in consultation with public health officials, will determine when it is safe for you to return to your normal activities.

Q: How does this virus spread?

A: The virus spreads easily from person to person. It is acquired from an infected person who has symptoms, even when the symptoms are mild. It is transmitted through droplets from a cough or sneeze that are airborne or on a surface.

Q: What is the incubation period?

A: COVID-19 symptoms commonly appear 2 to 14 days after exposure.

Q: How can I protect myself and my family?

A: The following are steps you can take to help reduce the spread of coronavirus, the flu and other respiratory diseases:

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Wash your hands often and thoroughly – for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. Antiseptic hand gel also may be used.
- Avoid touching your face, and especially your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Maintain a distance of at least 6 feet from others.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or your shirtsleeve, not with your hand.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Older adults and those with chronic health conditions should avoid large gatherings and public places.

Q: Who should wear a mask?

A: Healthy people do not need to wear a mask to protect themselves from COVID-19 or other respiratory diseases. People with symptoms of respiratory illness should wear a mask to prevent spreading disease. This is particularly important when visiting a health care facility.

Q: What about travel?

A: Older adults and anyone with an underlying health condition should avoid nonessential travel. Visit [CDC.gov/travel](https://www.cdc.gov/travel) for specific information about air travel, cruises and other travel recommendations.

Q: What is the current status of COVID-19 in the United States?

A: The situation is changing rapidly. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention updates information regularly at [coronavirus.gov](https://www.coronavirus.gov).

