



COVID-19: What You Need to Know Now

COVID-19 is a new lung infection that has resulted in a pandemic. There is no specific treatment though most people will recover with supportive care. Public health practices like handwashing, mask wearing and social distancing will help slow the spread of disease. The American Lung Association is sharing daily updates, resources and support at [Lung.org/covid19](https://www.lung.org/covid19).

How It Affects Your Body

The lungs are the first body organ affected by COVID-19. In the early days of an infection, COVID-19 rapidly invades cells in our lungs, flooding our airways with debris and fluids. Symptoms can range from mild to severe and may include a combination of these:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever or chills
- Muscle or body aches and headache
- Fatigue
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Congestion or sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell



People at Higher Risk for Severe Illness

While anyone can get COVID-19, there are some groups who are more at risk for severe illness if they do contract COVID-19. Based on current information, those groups include:

- Risk increases as you age, so the older you are the higher your risk
- People of all ages with these underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled:
 - Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
 - Cancer
 - Immunocompromised from organ transplant.
 - Severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 or higher)
 - Other medical conditions including serious heart conditions, type 2 diabetes, chronic kidney disease and sickle cell disease.
- Some people with chronic health conditions might be at an increased risk of severe illness. Some of the listed conditions include: moderate-to-severe asthma, pulmonary fibrosis, smoking or being in an immunocompromised state from use of corticosteroids or other immune weakening medicines.

Resources and Support Opportunities

During these times of uncertainty, we are seeing an uptick in the spread of myths and misinformation about COVID-19. We will continue to share trusted science-based information and tested public health measures that work. Follow [Lung.org/covid19](https://www.lung.org/covid19) for daily updates, new articles and fact-based advice to help protect yourself and your family.



Find more information on symptoms, diagnosis, treatment, recovery and prevention of COVID-19.



Access educational webinars about COVID-19 and recommendations. Register in advance, watch recorded updates and access our FAQs.



Stay connected to others in similar situations and find at-home exercises you can do to support your lung disease with our online support communities.



Our Lung HelpLine is staffed by respiratory therapists who can answer your COVID-19 questions. Call 1-800-LUNGUSA for one-on-one support.



Our Each Breath Blog, which includes timely updates on how to keep you and your family protected, personal stories from healthcare providers on the frontlines and more.



Contact your local American Lung Association office for local resources and support at [Lung.org/contact-us](https://www.lung.org/contact-us).



Our free online support communities on [Inspire.com](https://www.inspire.com) is for people living with lung disease. Receive peer-to-peer support, start or respond to threads, upload photos and search for specific topics to find other members who share the same interests.



We've partnered with [Imerman Angels](https://www.imermanangels.com) to match mentors with those facing lung cancer. Sign up to seek confidential support OR you can sign up to become a mentor. To receive a Mentor Angel: Register online by completing this [form](#).

As the nation's leading voluntary lung health organization, the American Lung Association is launching a \$25M initiative to end COVID-19 and defend against future respiratory virus pandemics. The COVID-19 Action Initiative will be used to:

- Expand the Lung Association's ongoing respiratory research program
- Enhance key public health measures through education and advocacy

The initiative will also work with public and private entities to increase research collaboration to develop effective vaccines, faster detection tests and treatment therapies, in order to stop future respiratory virus pandemics.

Visit [Lung.org/cv19-action](https://www.lung.org/cv19-action) for more information and how you can get involved.