# CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19)

Coronaviruses (CoV) are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV).

Coronaviruses are zoonotic i.e. they are transmitted between animals and people. Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) was discovered in 2019, not previously identified in humans, later in the early parts of December, the virus emerged in China and now has spread to over 90 different countries. As on 09th March 2020, India has reported **42 cases** mostly among those who had travelled from affected countries. It causes a minor illness in majority of patients with symptoms of fever and cough.
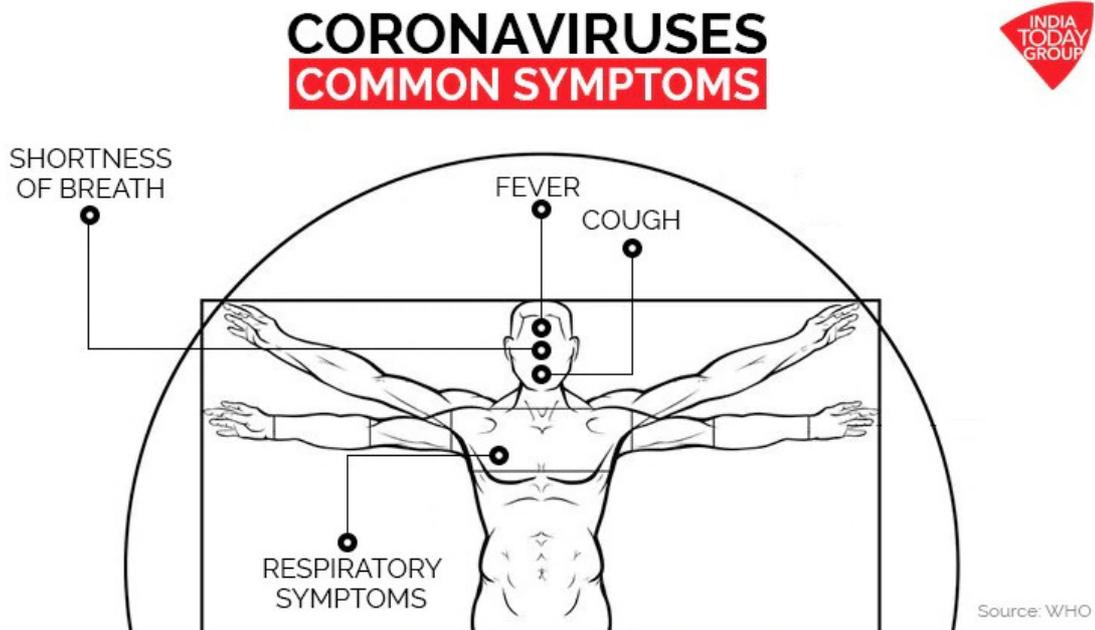
Common signs of the Infection:

- Respiratory symptoms
- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath and breathing difficulties.

In more severe cases, Infection can cause:

- Pneumonia
- Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
- Kidney failure
- Death.

Standard recommendations to prevent the spread of the Infection are as follows:

- **Wash your hands frequently -** Regular washing of your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water will kill the viruses that may be on your hands.

- **Maintain social distancing -** Maintain at least 1 metre (3 feet) distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing because when a person coughs or sneezes they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth which may contain the virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus, if the person coughing has the disease. Avoid close contact with anyone showing symptoms of respiratory illness such as coughing and sneezing.

- **Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth –** Our hands touch many surfaces and can pick up the virus. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth from there, the virus can enter your body and can make you sick.

- **Practice respiratory hygiene -** People of all ages can be infected by coronavirus (2019-nCoV). Older people and people with pre-existing medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease) appear to be more vulnerable to becoming severely ill with the virus.
  Make sure you and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene that is covering your mouth and nose, when coughing and sneezing with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue or handkerchief immediately. Droplets spread virus. If you are following a good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19.

- **Monitor your body temperature, if you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical care early -** Stay home if you feel unwell. If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention and call in advance. Follow the directions of your local health authority (http://www.mohfw.gov.in/) log onto this website to get updates from the Indian Government as national and local authorities' will have the up-to-date information on the situation in your area. Calling in advance will allow your health care provider to quickly direct you to the right health facility. This will also protect you and help prevent spread of viruses and other infections.

- You can **eat thoroughly cooked meat and eggs** which will boost up your immune system. If you consume healthy food it will naturally fight to ward of the virus.

- As per one of the rule's in the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, in the Schedule, after serial No. (7), the following item shall be added, namely: — "(8) **masks (2ply & 3ply surgical masks, N95 masks) & hand sanitizers**" – If you are not sick or don't have cold or cough, don't use masks. You should only **use medical or surgical masks**, if you have cold, cough, sneezing, fever or you are taking care of a patient who is suffering from the virus. The procedure to wear a mask is available on the World Health Organisation website. If you have cold, cough, fever or sneezing and you are using the mask

but there is a gap between your face and the mask - it won't work. Know how to use it. After using the masks, if you do not dispose of a soiled mask properly, it may affect you, your loved ones as well as others. Clean your hands with alcohol-based sanitisers, immediately after the disposal.

- **Hospitals and healthcare establishments are open 24x7 to support you**, in case of any emergency. Thousands of doctors and scientists are working, hand in hand, without a break to find a solution to cure this disease as there is no specific medicine recommended to prevent or treat the new coronavirus (2019-nCoV). However, those infected with the virus should receive appropriate care to relieve and treat symptoms, and those with severe illness should receive optimized supportive care. Some specific treatments are under investigation, and will be tested through clinical trials. WHO is helping to accelerate research and development efforts with a range or partners.

#Beatcovid-19, to know more about Coronavirus disease (COVID-19), log onto https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019 and you will receive instructions from World Health Organisation (WHO).

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