

# GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT COVID-19

## CORONAVIRUSES

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. Some cause illness in humans and others cause illness in animals, such as bats, camels and civets. Human coronaviruses generally cause mild illness, such as the common cold.

Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) is a new strain of coronavirus that is causing disease in humans and is spreading person-to-person. The name of the disease is COVID-19.

## WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT COVID-19?

As a new virus, the situation with COVID-19 is changing rapidly and we are still learning about how the virus spreads and the disease it causes.

We know:

- the virus causes respiratory disease that can spread from person to person
- most people experience mild flu-like symptoms, including fever, cough, sore throat and shortness of breath
- some people experience severe illness and, sadly, a small proportion die
- older people and people with underlying medical conditions seem to be more at risk of severe illness
- there is no treatment for COVID-19, but medical care can treat most of the symptoms – antibiotics do not work on viruses
- a vaccine is currently not available

## HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

The virus most likely spreads through:

- close contact with an infectious person (including in the 24 hours before they start showing symptoms)
- contact with droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze (if you are within 1.5 metres or two large steps of an infected person)
- touching objects or surfaces that have cough or sneeze droplets from an infected person and then touching your mouth, nose or eyes

## WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Symptoms of COVID-19 can range from mild illness to pneumonia. Some people will recover easily and others may get very sick very quickly.

People with coronavirus may experience:

- fever
- coughing
- a sore throat
- fatigue
- shortness of breath

## WHO IS MOST AT RISK?

The following people are at higher risk of serious illness associated with coronavirus:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people 50 years and older, with one or more chronic medical conditions
- people 65 years and older, with one or more chronic medical conditions
- people 70 years and older
- people with a weakened immune system

Chronic medical conditions include diabetes, lung disease, heart disease, cancer and kidney failure.

**MORE INFO**

**CLICK THE LINK BELOW:**  
[coronavirus.tas.gov.au](https://coronavirus.tas.gov.au)