



# COVID -19 Information

02/03/2020 (2<sup>nd</sup> Communication)

As you are aware we now have a documented case COVID-19 in Ireland.

Please see the information below from the HSE;

## The risk of catching coronavirus in Ireland

The risk of catching coronavirus in Ireland is still low. This may change.

However, most people may continue to go to work, school and other public places, as usual.

Follow the [advice on how to protect yourself from coronavirus](#).

Anyone who knows they have been in close contact with a confirmed case in the last 14 days and has symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, fever) should:

- **Isolate** themselves from other people - this means going into a different, well-ventilated room, with a phone;
- **Phone** their GP, or emergency department - if this is not possible, phone [112](#) or [999](#);
- In a **medical emergency** (if you have severe symptoms) phone [112](#) or [999](#).

Close contact means either:

- Face-to-face contact
- Spending more than 15 minutes within 2 metres of an infected person
- Living in the same house as an infected person

## Symptoms of coronavirus

It can take up to **14 days** for symptoms of coronavirus to appear.

The symptoms of coronavirus are:

- a cough
- shortness of breath
- breathing difficulties
- fever (high temperature)

If you have these symptoms and have **been in an affected area or in contact with a confirmed case, read this advice.**



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## When you may need to be tested for coronavirus

You will only need to be tested for coronavirus if you have **symptoms** and have in the last 14 days been:

- in **close contact** with a confirmed case of coronavirus
- to a **country or region with a spread of coronavirus**
- in a **healthcare centre or hospital** where patients with coronavirus were being treated

If your doctor thinks that you need a test for coronavirus, they will tell you where the test will be done. They will also tell you when to expect your results.

[Read this advice if you've been in an affected area or in contact with a confirmed case](#)

## How coronavirus is spread

Coronavirus is spread in **sneeze** or **cough** droplets.

You could get the virus if you:

- come into close contact with someone who has the virus and is coughing or sneezing
- touch surfaces that someone who has the virus has coughed or sneezed on

Because it's a new illness, we do not know how easily the virus spreads from person to person. We do not know if someone can spread the virus before they show symptoms.

The virus may only survive a few hours if someone who has it coughs or sneezes on a surface. Simple household disinfectants can kill the virus on surfaces. Clean the surface first and then use a disinfectant.

## Packages from affected countries

You **cannot** get coronavirus from packages or food that has come from China or elsewhere.

There is no evidence that animals or animal products legally imported into the EU are a health risk due to coronavirus.



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## Protect yourself from coronavirus

### Do

- [Wash your hands properly and regularly](#)
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve when you cough and sneeze.
- Put used tissues into a bin and wash your hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- [Follow the travel advice from the Department of Foreign Affairs.](#)

### Don't

Do **not** touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean.

## Wash your hands

- **after** coughing or sneezing
- **after** toilet use
- **before** eating
- **before** and **after** preparing food
- if you are in **contact with a sick person**, especially those with respiratory symptoms
- if your hands are **dirty**
- if you have handled **animals or animal waste**

Read a [step-by-step guide on how to properly wash your hands and avoid infection](#)

## Face masks

**Do not** use a face mask if you feel well and do not have symptoms - there is no evidence that using masks is of any benefit if you are not sick.

Use a face mask if you:

- **have** or may have coronavirus
- are in **close contact** with someone who has or may have coronavirus
- are a **healthcare worker in close contact** with people who have or may have coronavirus



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## Children and coronavirus

Follow this [advice if your child has recently travelled to a place with a spread of coronavirus](#).

Encourage your child to [wash their hands](#) regularly and properly.

Read more advice on [how to prevent your child from catching or spreading viral infections](#).

## Treatment for coronavirus

There is **no specific treatment** for coronavirus. But many of the symptoms of the virus can be treated.

If you get the virus, your healthcare professional will advise treatment based on your symptoms.

Antibiotics do not work against coronavirus or any viruses. They only work against bacterial infections.

## Vaccine

There is **currently no vaccine** to treat or protect against coronavirus.

The flu vaccine does not protect against coronavirus.

## At-risk groups and coronavirus

We do not know for sure which groups are most at risk of complications if they catch coronavirus.

But it is likely you are more at risk if you catch coronavirus and:

- are 65 years of age and over
- have a long-term medical condition – for example, heart disease, lung disease, diabetes or liver disease

You should follow the [advice on how to protect yourself from coronavirus](#) and other infections like flu.

## Pets and coronavirus

There is no evidence that pets such as cats and dogs can catch or spread coronavirus.



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## Avoid all non-essential travel to China

Follow the [up-to-date travel information from the Department of Foreign Affairs](#) for travel advice on countries and regions affected by coronavirus.

The Department of Foreign Affairs has advised people to avoid all non-essential travel to China.

If you have to travel to China:

- do not visit animal or bird markets in China
- do not go to places in China where live or dead animals are handled
- do not visit anyone in China who is ill with cold or flu-like symptoms such as sneezing or coughing
- do not touch animals and their poo (droppings) in China

[Wash your hands properly](#) and regularly with soap and water.

**If you have any queries please contact:**

**HSE Live: 1850 241850**