



# Coronavirus (COVID-19)

## FACT SHEET

### What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a disease caused by the virus SARS-CoV-2, a novel coronavirus that was identified in 2019. COVID-19 is part of the coronavirus family, which includes common viruses that cause various diseases ranging from head colds to more severe conditions, such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS).

Coronaviruses, including COVID-19, spread quickly via droplets released when you breathe, cough, sneeze, laugh, or speak.

### What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

COVID-19 causes typical respiratory symptoms that can feel like the flu, a cold, or pneumonia. COVID-19 can attack or affect other portions of the body outside of the respiratory system. While most individuals with COVID-19 exhibit mild symptoms, some individuals are at higher risk of severe illness.

Common symptoms include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- New lost of taste or smell
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Muscle and/or body aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Some individuals may remain asymptomatic. However, they are still at risk of exposing others to the virus.



## Is COVID-19 Preventable?

Yes! COVID-19 is preventable with basic preventative steps to reduce the risk of transmission. COVID-19 vaccines are available at all Choctaw Nation Health Services Authority (CNHSA) facilities at no cost, and remain available at major retailers, pharmacies, and local health departments. While vaccinated individuals may contract COVID-19, staying up to date with your COVID-19 vaccination can lower the risk of developing severe disease, worsening symptoms, and hospitalization.

COVID-19 can also be prevented by avoiding exposure to individuals who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or those who have recently tested positive. Maintaining good hygiene practices, such as handwashing, wearing a high-quality mask, and/or social distancing are also steps to prevent infection.

## Who's at higher risk of COVID-19 infection?

Individuals more likely to get sick or have worsening symptoms include those ages 50 years or older, unvaccinated individuals, and those with certain underlying medical conditions such as chronic lung disease, heart disease, weakened immune system, or other chronic medical conditions.

## Is there treatment available for COVID-19?

There are certain treatments available for COVID-19 for those who test positive and meet certain criteria. FDA authorized antiviral medications are available, even for mild disease, to minimize the risk of hospitalization and/or death for those at higher risk of developing severe illness. Starting antiviral medications should not be delayed and must be started within days of developing symptoms to be effective. Antiviral treatments stop portions of the virus to reduce multiplication in the body, helping to reduce the risk of severe illness and death.

Certain antiviral treatments have contraindications for certain medical conditions or medications. Always consult with your physician before initiating treatment and provide a list of underlying medical conditions and medications you may take to reduce the risk of interaction.