

# Act together. Protect each other.

## Advice on Coronavirus

**This leaflet has been created to provide clear information on what is currently known about the coronavirus or COVID-19. It outlines actions every person can take to help stop the spread of the coronavirus. By protecting yourself, you also protect your loved ones, your neighbours, your colleagues and your community.**  
**Act together. Protect each other.**

### WHAT IS IT?

COVID-19 is a new illness that can affect your lungs and airways. It's caused by a virus called coronavirus.

### SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

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

### MOST COMMON SYMPTOMS

- A cough—any kind of cough, not just dry.
- Shortness of breath.
- Breathing difficulties.
- Fever (high temperature).

### WHEN YOU MAY NEED TO CALL A DOCTOR

These symptoms are quite general and there is only a need to PHONE a doctor if any of the below apply to you:

- You have travelled from an affected area.
- You are a close contact of a confirmed case.
- If you are feeling very unwell.

### HOW IS IT 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 and then touch your face, eyes or mouth.

### AT RISK GROUPS

You could be at risk if you:

- Are 60 years of age and over.
- Have a long-term medical condition—for example, heart disease, lung disease, high blood pressure, diabetes or cancer.
- Are pregnant.

### PETS AND CORONAVIRUS

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

# Chain of Infection

**The chain of infection contains six elements. The transmission of a disease does not take place unless all six elements are present.**

#### 1. Infectious agent

The bug itself.

#### 2. Reservoir

Where it survives, thrives and reproduces.

#### 3. Portal of exit

How it leaves the body.

#### 4. Mode of transmission

How it travels.

#### 5. Portal of entry

Where it enters the body.

#### 6. Susceptible host

Person at risk of developing an infection from the disease.

## Breaking the Chain

1. Understand how the infectious agent is transmitted.

2. Adopt good hand hygiene practices and good respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette.

3. Clean and disinfect the environment frequently.

# Staying Healthy

## Do

Do wash your hands properly and often using alcohol rub or soap and water.

Do cover your coughs and sneezes (use a tissue or your elbow.)

Do put used tissues into a bin and wash your hands.

Do clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Do avoid close contact with people who are not well or symptomatic.

Do stay at home if you are sick to help stop the spread of any infection or illness you may have.

**\* Watch out for Irish Red Cross community workshops in your locality on handwashing and keeping yourself healthy.**

# General

## Do

Do fact-check any news you read and make sure information is from a trustworthy source.

Do educate yourself and others with accurate information such as proper hand washing and cleaning practises.

Do take time to acknowledge your own normal feelings of fear and helplessness.

Do call your family and friends to keep in touch and show you care for each other.

**\* It is very important in the coming weeks or months that people who are sick have open lines of communication to people in their community.**

## Do not

Do not share information and news that can confuse or cause fear without fact-checking against a trustworthy source.

Do not blindly follow other recommendations which may lead to unhelpful and irrational behaviours such as excessive purchases of food and medical supplies.

Do not spend too much time looking for information or news. Excessive reading will only create fear and anxiety.

# Contact Information

## HELPLINES & SUPPORT

### HSE helpline

1850 24 1850  
Mon–Fri 8am to 8pm  
Sat + Sun 10am to 5pm

### Alone support line

0818 222 024  
Mon–Fri 8am to 8pm

### In an emergency call

112 or 999

Place your eircode here to assist locating you in an emergency.

Irish Red Cross  
16 Merrion Square,  
Dublin 2, D02 XF85

T +353 (0)1 642 4600

[www.redcross.ie](http://www.redcross.ie)

## TRUSTWORTHY SOURCES OF INFORMATION

### Irish Red Cross

[www.redcross.ie](http://www.redcross.ie)

### Department of Health

[www.gov.ie/health-covid-19](http://www.gov.ie/health-covid-19)

### Health Service Executive

[www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)

### World Health Organization

[www.who.int](http://www.who.int)

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