**What is COVID-19?**
COVID-19 is a disease that was first identified in humans in 2019. It is caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Because it is a new virus, we are continuing to learn more about it. Although most people who have COVID-19 have mild symptoms, COVID-19 can also cause severe illness and even death. Some groups, including older adults and people who have certain underlying medical conditions, are at increased risk of severe illness. People can also be infected by the COVID-19 but never have symptoms.

**How is COVID-19 spread?**
COVID-19 spreads mainly from person to person through respiratory droplets over short distances. Sometimes, under certain conditions, it can be spread through the air over longer distances. Respiratory droplets are released into the air when, for example, people speak, sing, cough, shout, sneeze, and breathe heavily. 

Droplets that contain the virus can cause infection when they are breathed in or if they land in mouths or noses of others. Droplets can also land on surfaces and objects and may infect people who touch a surface and then touch their mouth, nose, or eyes, but this is not thought to be a common way the virus spreads. See CDC [How COVID-19 spreads](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-professionals/patient-care/hygiene-prevention.html).

**What are the symptoms of COVID-19?**
Symptoms of COVID-19 may include one or more of the following: fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath or trouble breathing, feeling tired, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, stuffy or runny nose, or new loss of taste or smell. Talk to your doctor about any of these or other symptoms that worry you. If you need help finding a doctor, call the 24/7 helpline at 2-1-1 or visit the 211LA.org. To learn about symptoms & what to do if you are sick, visit ph.lacounty.gov/covidcare.

**When should I get tested for COVID-19?**
You should get a swab or saliva test for COVID-19 if:
- You have symptoms of COVID-19 (whether you are fully vaccinated or not) or
- You are a close contact to someone with COVID-19 (and are not fully vaccinated)

Testing is also recommended in other situations such as some screening programs for work, group housing, school, sports, or travel. Visit ph.lacounty.gov/covidtests to learn more about testing. To make an appointment for free testing, visit covid19.lacounty.gov/testing or call 2-1-1.

**What if I test positive for COVID-19?**
If you test positive for COVID-19, you must isolate. Stay home and away from others for at least 10 days from when your symptoms started AND at least 1 day after your fever has gone without the use of medicine AND your symptoms have gotten better. If you don’t have symptoms, you must isolate for 10 days from the date your positive test was taken. Tell all your close contacts that they have been exposed. For more details, visit ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation.

**When do I need to quarantine?**
If you are not fully vaccinated, and you are a close contact to someone with COVID-19 or you recently traveled outside California, you must quarantine for 10 days. See ph.lacounty.gov/covidquarantine for details.
**Frequently Asked Questions**

**COVID-19**

**How can I get vaccinated against COVID-19?**
COVID-19 vaccinations are available at County-run sites and many community sites without an appointment. Visit [www.VaccinateLACounty.com](http://www.VaccinateLACounty.com) to find a location near you. If you need help making an appointment, need transportation to a vaccination site, or are homebound, you can call 1-833-540-0473 from 8am to 8:30pm 7 days a week. Information is also available in multiple languages 24/7 by calling 2-1-1. Vaccinations are always free and available to everyone age 16 and over, regardless of immigration status.

**How can I protect myself and others from getting COVID-19?**
Stopping this pandemic is going to take all our tools
- Get vaccinated
- Wear a mask that fits well (see [ph.lacounty.gov/masks](http://ph.lacounty.gov/masks) for more information)
- Avoid crowds and poorly ventilated spaces
- Stay at least 6 feet away from others
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Wash your hands often

**I’m still feeling stressed about COVID-19 – what can I do?**
As the world continues to combat COVID-19, you may feel more concerned, worried, and fearful for your health and the health of your loved ones. Physical distancing, financial troubles, lifestyle changes and other factors may also cause added stress. Be sure to watch for signs of distress, engage in regular self-care, and seek out help when needed.

If you or someone you know is having a hard time coping, help is available 24/7 by calling the LA County Department of Mental Health’s Helpline 1-800-854-7771. You can also text “LA” to 741741 or talk to your doctor. The webpage [http://dmh.lacounty.gov/resources](http://dmh.lacounty.gov/resources) includes tips to help manage stress and improve your emotional health as well as free access Headspace Plus - for mindfulness and meditation resources.

**What should I do if I’m being harassed or experiencing discrimination?**
The County is committed to assuring that all residents affected by COVID-19 are treated with respect and compassion and that we all separate facts from fear and guard against stigma. If you are being harassed or experiencing discrimination based on race, nation of origin or other identities, you should report it. 2-1-1 takes reports of hate crimes, hate acts, and incidents of bullying that have occurred within LA County regardless of whether or not a crime has been committed. Call 2-1-1 or file a report online at [211la.org/form/anti-hate](http://211la.org/form/anti-hate).

**Where can I get reliable information about COVID-19?**
- There are a lot of scams as well as incorrect information about COVID-19. Check with trusted sources for accurate information about COVID-19 such as the:LA County Department of Public Health: [ph.lacounty.gov/Coronavirus](http://ph.lacounty.gov/Coronavirus)
  - including information about how to avoid a COVID-19 scam
- California Department of Public Health
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- World Health Organization (WHO)