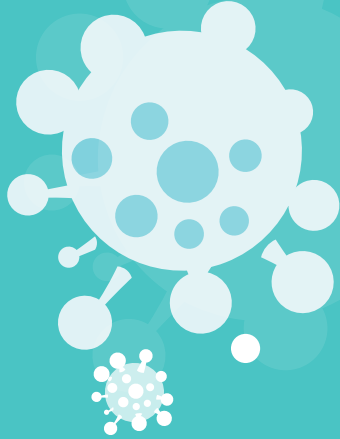


WHAT IS A CORONAVIRUS ?



Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that can cause illness in animals and humans. In humans, several coronaviruses are known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). The most recently discovered coronavirus is named SARS CoV-2 (also known as COVID-19).

Coronaviruses are zoonotic, meaning they are normally transmitted between animals and people. SARS CoV-2 is a new strain of coronavirus that has not previously been identified in humans. It was first reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) on 31 December 2019 in Wuhan, China.

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the new coronavirus, SARS CoV-2. COVID-19 is affecting 213 countries and territories around the world and 2 international cruise ships.

How is COVID-19 spread?

COVID-19 can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth that are spread when a person with COVID-19 coughs, sneezes or exhales. These droplets land on objects and surfaces near the person. The disease is also transmitted from an infected person's saliva (even when the person is not showing any symptoms), such as when the person talks and spittle lands on surfaces.

Other people get infected with COVID-19 when they touch these objects or surfaces, and in turn, touch their eyes, nose or mouth. People can also get infected with COVID-19 if they breathe in droplets from a person with COVID-19 who coughs, sneezes or exhales, or if they have direct contact with an infected person, e.g. by shaking hands or hugging. This is why it is important to stay more than 2 metres (6 feet) away from a person who is ill. It is advisable to stay 2 metres away from anyone who is not a member of your household because infected persons may spread the virus before they become ill. This is referred to as social distancing.

What is Nigeria doing to control the spread of COVID-19 in the country?

The government of Nigeria, through the Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH), the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) as well as state ministries of health in all 36 states of the Federation have been strengthening measures to manage the spread of COVID-19 in Nigeria.

- The Multi-sectoral coronavirus Preparedness Group led by the NCDC has been activated to a national Emergency Operations Centre to coordinate response activities.
- The NCDC is working with state governments to identify, trace and monitor contacts of cases as well as to identify new cases.
- The Port Health Services Division of the Department of Public Health has heightened screening and surveillance at the ports of entry, particularly for travellers returning from countries with ongoing transmission in the last 14 days.
- The Nigeria Field Epidemiology and Training Programme (NFELTP) is working closely with staff at the Port Health Services to review and analyse the forms used for screening at points of entry. The information on these forms is also used for contact tracing when needed.
- The NCDC, FMOH, Lagos State Ministry of Health (LSMOH) and Ogun State Ministry of Health continue to educate and inform the public and other stakeholders through announcements, public health advisories, situation reports, videos, and other guidelines on controlling the spread of COVID-19.
- Nigeria closed all its airports from 23 March and suspended the movement of all passenger aircraft all over the country, including commercial and private jets.
- The government has banned gatherings of more than 20 persons, including religious gatherings. Offenders are arrested and prosecuted in a court of law. All schools have been closed.
- The government has enforced total lockdown in states with a high number of COVID-19 cases and a national lockdown is likely to be effected by the end of April 2020.

To report suspected cases of COVID-19 or contact with COVID-19 cases, you can call the NCDC toll-free number on [0800 9700 0010](tel:080097000010)

What is the national case definition for COVID-19?

Suspected case:

Any person (including severely ill patients) with any of the following symptoms: fever, cough or shortness of breath/difficulty breathing who within 14 days before the onset of illness had any of the following:

- a history of travel to or from any country with confirmed and ongoing community transmission of COVID-19, or

- close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19, or
- exposure to a healthcare facility where COVID-19 cases have been reported.

Probable case:

- A suspected case for whom testing for COVID-19 is inconclusive or for whom testing was positive.

Confirmed case:

- Any person with a confirmed case of COVID-19 with or without symptoms.

If you or anyone around you matches any of the case definitions above, please stay at home and contact the NCDC on **070 3286 4444** to arrange for sample collection and testing.

For updates on COVID-19 by country, see [https://www.who.int/redirect-pages/page/novel-coronavirus-\(covid-19\)-situation-dashboard](https://www.who.int/redirect-pages/page/novel-coronavirus-(covid-19)-situation-dashboard) or <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>

Does Nigeria have the capacity to diagnose COVID-19?

Yes.

There are now 13 laboratories in Nigeria and as at 24 April, 10,431 tests had been conducted, of which 1,095 were positive. 49% of the positive cases have no epidemiological link to travel outside Nigeria. Daily updates are available at <https://ncdc.gov.ng/>

Health officials are advised to call **070 3286 4444** for sample transportation and related advice if they have a case that fits the national case definition.

Where are the treatment centres in Nigeria?

Treatment centres are located in the five priority states with international airports: Lagos, Rivers, Enugu, Kano and the Federal Capital Territory. Healthcare workers from these treatment centres have been trained on how to manage COVID-19 cases using approved guidelines.

What should you do if you suspect you have been exposed to a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19?

Immediately notify the NCDC on the toll-free number **0800 9700 0010**.

You may be advised to stay indoors (self-quarantine) for a period of 14 days with daily monitoring

by the NCDC to see if you develop any symptoms. Please avoid close contact with other people during self-quarantine. If you do develop symptoms during this time, the NCDC working through the state health authorities will arrange for you to be tested and if positive, you will be moved to a treatment centre.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

The most common symptoms are:

- a fever;
- a dry cough; and
- tiredness

Others symptoms can include aches and pains, nasal congestion, a runny nose, sore throat or diarrhoea, and shortness of breath. Symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually, while some people have no symptoms at all. Most patients recover from the disease without needing special medical treatment. **People with a fever, cough and shortness of breath/difficulty breathing should seek medical attention.** People over 60, and those with underlying medical conditions like high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes, are more likely to develop serious illness. Sadly, about 3% of people with COVID-19 have died. The incubation period, or the time between being infected with the virus and showing symptoms, is usually 1 to 14 days, most commonly around 5 days. In some cases, it has been up to 27 days.

Unwell people who have recently returned from any country with cases of COVID-19 should immediately contact the NCDC on **070 3286 4444** or **0800 9700 0010 (toll-free)**.

Is there anything you can do to avoid becoming infected and to prevent the spread of COVID-19?

Yes.

Stay aware of the latest official information on the COVID-19 outbreak, available on the WHO website (<https://www.who.int>) and through the NCDC, FMOH and LSMOH websites and social media channels.

To reduce the risk of infection or spread of COVID-19, you are advised to adhere to the following hand and respiratory hygiene and social distancing measures:

- Wash your hands regularly for at least 20 seconds with soap under running water. Where hand washing is not practical or possible, use an alcohol-based rub (hand sanitiser).
- Cover your mouth and nose properly with tissue when sneezing and coughing and immediately dispose of the tissue in a covered waste bin. After this, wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitiser. You are strongly advised not to re-use handkerchiefs.

- You may also cough into your elbow if a disposable tissue is not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- If you are at high risk of infection, avoid crowded places.
- Avoid travelling at this time, especially if you show any of the symptoms. If you become sick while on a journey, inform the journey crew immediately. Avoid close contact with other people while you are symptomatic and cover your mouth and nose with a face mask.
- Avoid close contact with anyone showing symptoms of respiratory illness such as coughing and sneezing by maintaining a distance of at least 2 metres (6 feet) from the sick person.
- If you feel unwell, stay at home. If you have a fever, cough and shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, call the NCDC toll-free line on **0800 9700 0010** and follow the instructions for seeking healthcare.
- Clean surfaces such as kitchen counters, table tops, work desks and door handles regularly with disinfectant.
- Educate yourself about COVID-19. Make sure the information comes from reliable sources, such as your local or national health agency, the WHO website, or your local healthcare professional.
- Healthcare workers are advised to observe standard infection prevention and control measures when attending to patients and to document their travel history.

What can businesses do to protect their staff?

Businesses have an important role to play in protecting their employees and the general public. Employers are advised to stay informed through official channels of communication on COVID-19 (NCDC/LSMOH/FMOH) and to circulate NCDC's public health advisory on COVID-19 to all staff. In addition, workplaces are advised to follow WHO guidelines on COVID-19 workplace readiness: https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/getting-workplace-ready-for-covid-19.pdf?sfvrsn=359a81e7_6

Should you wear a face mask?

- Face masks should be worn in addition to and not in the place of hand-washing, social distancing and other preventative measures.
- Wear a face mask if you are ill with COVID-19 symptoms (especially coughing and sneezing), a health worker, or caring for someone who may have COVID-19.
- Members of the general public are being asked to use cloth masks and not surgical or N95 masks due to a global shortage of these masks. These should be reserved for health workers who need them the most.
- Recent studies show that people who are infected but do not have symptoms (asymptomatic)

are also likely to play a role in the spread of COVID-19. The cloth masks are thus intended to prevent the wearer from spreading the virus to others even if the wearer is asymptomatic.

How should you wear/use a face mask?

- Fit the mask snugly over your nose and mouth without leaving gaps, and do not touch or fiddle with the mask once it is on.
- Do not lower the mask when speaking, coughing or sneezing.
- Remove the mask from behind using the ties or ear bands once it is damp or visibly soiled.
- Avoid touching the front or inner side of the mask once it is on and when taking it off.
- Disposable masks can only be used once and must be thrown into a closed bin once removed.
- Wash your hands thoroughly before putting on and after removing the face mask.
- A cloth face mask should be washed immediately in warm soapy water or in a washing machine. You can also iron the cloth mask once it is washed to assist with sanitisation.
- Each person needs at least two cloth face masks so that one is available while the other is being washed.

If you are sick, does a mask help to restrict spreading the virus?

Yes. Because the virus is spread through droplets from the nose and mouth of someone sick with COVID-19 (coughing/sneezing), a face mask is an effective barrier that prevents the droplets from spreading.

Is hand washing or using hand sanitiser better?

Proper and frequent hand washing using soap and running water (for at least 20 seconds) is always the preferred and most effective method of hand hygiene. However, where hand washing is not practical or possible, using an alcohol-based rub (hand sanitiser) is equally advisable. The WHO advises to regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water. For the proper hand washing technique, see here https://www.who.int/gpsc/clean_hands_protection/en/

Is it true that a warmer climate/sunlight slows the spread?

From the evidence so far, COVID-19 can be transmitted in ALL AREAS, including areas with hot and humid weather. Regardless of climate, adopt protective measures if you live in or travel to an area reporting COVID-19. The best way to protect yourself against COVID-19 is by frequently washing your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitiser.

By doing this you eliminate viruses that may be on your hands and avoid infection that could occur by then touching your eyes, mouth, and nose.

Avoid fake news.

Stay updated at www.covid19.ncdc.gov.ng

What health cover benefits do you have access to for COVID-19?

We are making every effort to manage the impact of COVID-19 on our members, and would like to confirm the following regarding your health cover for testing and treatment:

- Your Liberty Health Cover (Liberty Blue) covers the diagnosis and treatment of COVID-19 at our network of contracted providers. This includes paying for the costs associated with consultations, pathology tests and supportive medicines. Your other Liberty Health Cover (Liberty Blue) benefits will remain the same during this time.
- Separate to the cover we provide, each national health department/ministry of health is implementing specific public health procedures and protocols to manage suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19. This means that all cases should be reported to the local health authority. It also means that testing and treatment may be done at state designated laboratories and healthcare facilities, which are trained to respond to an outbreak. In this instance, Liberty Health Cover (Liberty Blue) will do everything possible to support these nationally defined procedures and protocols and we need you to please comply with the health department/ministry of health's requirements as a matter of national importance.
- Services such as cross-border emergency medical evacuations that are available through your Liberty Health Cover (Liberty Blue) will be impacted by the local government response and related travel restrictions in both the departing and receiving countries. Before an evacuation, you will be checked to assess your risk of infection – if there is no risk or no travel restrictions are in place, the evacuation will continue as per the air ambulance service provider protocol and conforming to the respective country's regulations.

REFERENCES AND DAILY UPDATES ON COVID-19

<https://covid19.ncdc.gov.ng/>

<https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/index.html>

<https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses>

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

<https://www.who.int/ith/28-02-2020-update-COVID-19-outbreak-travel-advice/en/>

For more information, support and other ways we can assist, please send an email to:

thtcallcentre@totalhealthtrust.com

Disclaimer: Information in this FAQ is correct as at 23 April 2020. However, facts may change as more becomes known about the virus. For the latest information on the pandemic, please see the WHO and CDC websites referenced above.