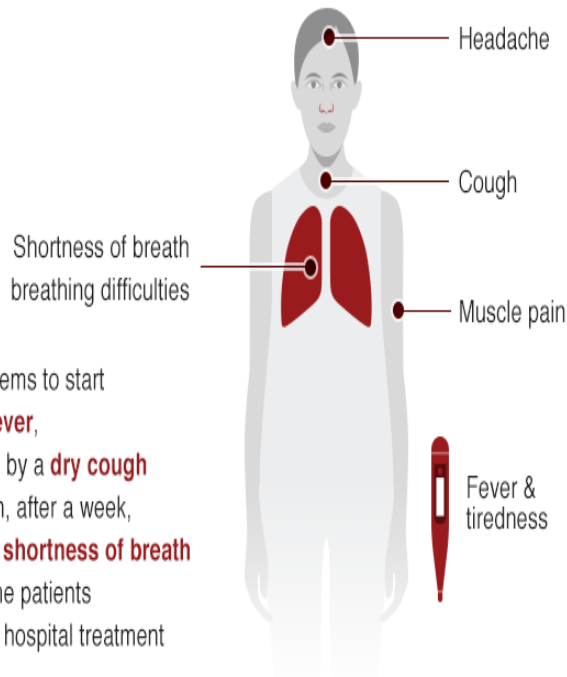


WHAT IS CORONAVIRUS AND WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

James Gallagher BBC Health and science correspondent 3 March 2020

Symptoms of coronavirus (Covid-19)

Coronavirus has spread to more than 60 countries, including the UK.



Virus seems to start with a **fever**, followed by a **dry cough** and then, after a week, leads to **shortness of breath** and some patients needing hospital treatment

Symptoms and how to protect yourself. So, what is the disease and what can you do to protect yourself? What are the coronavirus symptoms? It seems to start with a fever, followed by a dry cough. After a week, it leads to shortness of breath and some patients require hospital treatment. These symptoms do not necessarily mean you have the illness and are similar to those for much more common viruses, such as colds and flu.

In more severe cases, coronavirus can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, multiple organ failure and even death. Older people, and people with pre-existing medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease), are more likely to become severely ill. The incubation period - between infection and showing any symptoms - lasts up to 14 days, the World Health Organization (WHO) says. But some researchers say it may be up to 24 days.

Source: WHO

BBC

- [How is the UK planning for an outbreak?](#)
- [A visual guide to the outbreak](#)
- [Coronavirus: Can it harm breastfed babies, and other questions](#)

How do I protect myself? [Regular and thorough hand washing](#) is crucial in the fight to avoid picking up the disease, health agencies say.

It is not yet known exactly how coronavirus spreads from person to person. However, similar viruses are spread via droplets, such as those produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. So, coughing and sneezing into tissues, not touching your face with unwashed hands, and trying to avoid close contact with infected people are important.

What should I do if I think I have coronavirus? The NHS says the risk to individuals in the UK remains low. But people who think they may be affected by coronavirus **their local doctors for further advice**. They should not go to their GP, or A&E. If you have come into contact with somebody who may be infected, [you may be told to self-isolate](#). People needing to do so should [take "common-sense" steps to avoid close contact with other people](#), says Public Health England.

CORONA VIRUS POSTER

Cut out and post on notice board

What should I do to prevent catching and spreading the virus?



Wash hands frequently with soap and water or use a sanitiser gel



Catch coughs and sneezes with disposable tissues



Throw away used tissues (then wash hands)



If you don't have a tissue use your sleeve



Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands



Avoid close contact with people who are unwell

Source: NHS

BBC

Coronavirus guidance

Advice for people who think they may have coronavirus

Step one  Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital

Step two  Contact NHS 111

Step three  You may be asked to self-isolate

Step four  Your details may be passed to local health protection teams

Step five  You may then be tested for the virus

Step six  A doctor or nurse will give you advice on what to do next

Source: NHS England/Public Health England

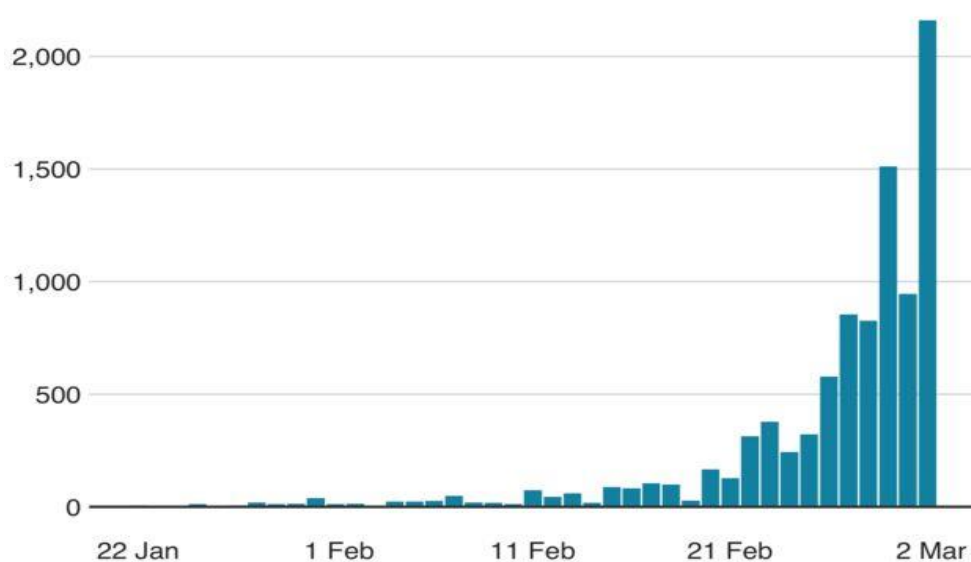
BBC

Traveller's advice. Advice for people who have travelled back to the UK from the main affected areas and some other countries has been issued by the government. Full details of [the countries concerned and whether you need to self-isolate are available here](#). The Foreign Office advises against all travel to Hubei province and [all but essential travel to the rest of mainland China, Daegu and Cheongdo in South Korea and 11 small towns in northern Italy](#). Other countries have their own measures in place. For example, the US Centre for Disease Control and Prevention [advises people showing symptoms to call their healthcare provider](#), and those who are mildly ill to self-isolate.

How fast is it spreading and will I get it? Hundreds of new cases are being reported worldwide each day. However, it is thought health agencies may be unaware of many cases. After starting in China, coronavirus is now spreading fast in countries like South Korea, Italy and Iran.

Cases outside China have grown

Daily confirmed cases of coronavirus outside China



Source: World Health Organization. Updated: 2 Mar 16:00 GMT

BBC

How deadly is coronavirus and will I get better? Four out of five people who contract coronavirus will only experience mild symptoms, a WHO examination of [data from 56,000 patients](#) says. It suggests:

- 80% develop mild symptoms
- 14% develop severe symptoms
- 6% become critically ill

The proportion dying from the disease appears low (between 1% and 2%) - but the figures are unreliable. Thousands are still being treated but may go on to die - so the death rate could be higher. But it is also unclear how many mild cases remain unreported - so the death rate could also be lower. To put this into context, about one billion people catch influenza every year, with between 290,000 and 650,000 deaths. The severity of flu changes every year. Right now, treatment relies on the basics - keeping the patient's body going, including breathing support, until their immune system can fight off the virus. However, the work to develop a vaccine is under way and it is hoped there will be human trials before the end of the year. Hospitals are also testing anti-viral drugs to see if they have an impact.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/health-51048366>