

# COVID-19 FACTS

- COVID-19 is an illness caused by a virus. Symptoms vary from person to person and can range from very mild to very serious and can even cause death.
- COVID-19 symptoms include:
  - Fever
  - New or worsening: cough, shortness of breath
  - Sore throat
  - Runny nose, nasal congestion
  - Difficulty swallowing
  - Change in taste or smell
  - Nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain.
- While some people may have symptoms that feel like a cold or flu, for others, infection can be very serious. In Canada:
  - over 20,000 people have died from COVID-19 as of February 9, 2021;
  - an average of 3500 people die from the flu every year.
- COVID-19 can be very serious in older people and those with chronic health problems such as heart disease, cancer or diabetes.
- Some people who get sick with COVID-19 stay sick for weeks or months. They can have fatigue, breathing problems, heart trouble and mental fog. This is called “long COVID”.
- COVID-19 is spread when an infected person coughs, sneezes, sings, shouts or talks. It can spread to other people, even before the infected person knows that they have the virus.
- There is a higher risk of getting COVID-19:
  - in close contact settings where you are closer than 2 metres from other people,
  - in closed spaces,
  - in crowded places,
  - in places where there is singing, shouting or heavy breathing,
  - the longer you are in any of these situations.

## To help stop the spread of COVID-19 you can:

- Have close contact only with those in your household
- Keep 2 meters from others and wash your hands often
- Wear a face covering or mask indoors unless you are at home
- Wear a face covering or mask outdoors if you cannot keep 2 meters away from others
- Stay home if you are sick
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or sneeze/cough into your upper sleeve or elbow
- Consider attending events virtually
- Only take essential trips, e.g. school, work, grocery store.
- Keep a daily list of where you go
- Download the COVID Alert app



## More Information

- **Hamilton Public Health Services**  
[www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus](http://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus)  
 COVID Hotline: 905-974-9848
- **Government of Ontario**  
[www.ontario.ca/coronavirus](http://www.ontario.ca/coronavirus)
- **Health Canada**  
[www.canada.ca/coronavirus](http://www.canada.ca/coronavirus)