

Obesity and COVID-19

COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease-2019) is a disease caused by the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2. If you are living with overweight, obesity or diabetes, you are not at increased risk for developing COVID-19 – but you may be at risk for more severe symptoms and disease progression. Here's what you need to know:



There is some evidence that the virus becomes airborne after someone has sneezed or coughed in an area, or during certain medical procedures. It can also be spread when a person touches a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touches their eyes, nose or mouth.



Infection with SARS-CoV-2 can range from mild, self-limiting flu-like illness to severe pneumonia, respiratory failure and death. **When someone is exposed to the virus and shows symptoms of COVID-19, it is impossible to tell who will develop mild or more severe illness.**



The most common symptoms reported are fever, fatigue, cough or chest tightness, and shortness of breath. However, most people will have mild infection and some may not even know they have it.

65+

Patients older than 65 and those with cardiac disease, hypertension, diabetes and COPD are more likely to have severe disease or die. However younger, apparently healthy patients can also succumb to this illness.

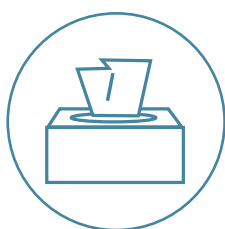


Cardiac, respiratory and metabolic diseases (such as diabetes and hypertension) are more common among patients with obesity. These have been identified as risk factors for more severe disease or death from COVID-19. It is critical that people living with obesity, and especially people with a BMI over 40, take all possible precautions to avoid infection.

Everyone should do their best to optimize preventive measures.



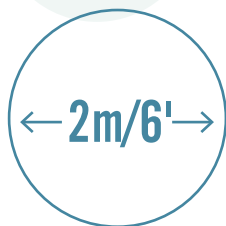
Thorough handwashing with soap and water kills the virus. Use of alcohol-based hand rubs is also useful but not as effective as hand washing.



Respiratory hygiene is key. Cover the mouth and nose with bent elbow or tissue when coughing or sneezing.



Avoid touching mouth, nose and eyes as the virus can survive on surfaces.



Maintain social distancing and actively avoid contact with someone who has respiratory symptoms. If you are a caregiver, follow public health advice on protecting yourself (e.g. using a face mask) around symptomatic people.



Avoid non-essential travel even within your own community to restrict the spread of infection.



Maintain adequate nutrition and hydration.



Maintain physical activity but avoid crowded places.

Click here to learn more from the World Health Organization

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