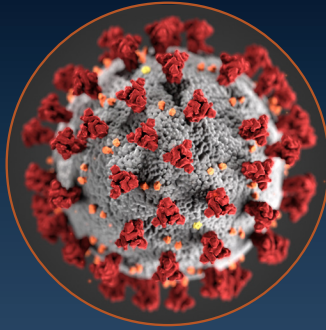# Allergy & Asthma NETWORK

Distinguishing the Difference: COVID-19 vs. Allergies vs. Flu

Coronavirus: A large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe respiratory diseases. The viruses are transmitted between animals and people.

COVID-19: A mutated version of the coronavirus – called novel. It was first detected in Wuhan, China in November 2019. On March 11, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic.

	COVID-19	ALLERGIES	FLU
SPREAD AND SYMPTOMS	• Spread person-to-person • Fever • Cough • Shortness of breath • Chills (sometimes with shaking) • Sore throat • Congestion or runny nose • Muscle or body aches • Fatigue • Headache • A loss of taste or smell • Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea	• Not spread • Itchy, runny nose, sneezing, coughing • Itchy, watery eyes. Redness • Itchy, sensitive skin, rash or hives – swelling • Shortness of breath, cough, wheeze, chest tightness	• Spread person-to-person • Fever/chills • Cough, sore throat • Runny or stuffy nose • Muscle or body aches • Headaches • Fatigue
PREVENTION	• Avoid exposure whenever possible • Wash your hands • Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if needed • Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth • Avoid close contact with others	• Avoid your allergy triggers • If you're not sure what your triggers are – ask about allergy testing • Medicate for allergies before pollen season or potential exposure	• Get the flu vaccine • Avoid close contact with others • Stay home when you are sick • Cover your nose & mouth • Wash your hands • Avoid touching your eyes, nose & mouth
TREATMENT	• Call your doctor if you think you were exposed • Stay home except to get medical care • Stay away from others • Limit contact with pets • Call ahead before going to the doctor • Wear a facemask only if you are sick and around others	• Take prescribed or over-the-counter allergy medications • Antihistamines • Nasal sprays • Immunotherapy where prescribed • Allergy shots • Allergy tablets • Nasal wash/rinse	• Antiviral drugs may be an option for people at high risk for complications and people with lung conditions • Stay home and rest • Contact your doctor early if you're at high risk • Most people don't need to go to the emergency room

What to do if you are sick?

- Call your doctor and discuss your symptoms and potential exposure. Your doctor will decide if you should be tested for coronavirus.
- Stay home and self-quarantine yourself. Separate yourself from other people in your home.
- Wear a facemask when around other people.
- Cover your cough and sneezes, or cough into your elbow.
- Wash your hands often, and don't share objects.
- Follow evidence-based guidance from CDC and other credible sources.
- Seek immediate medical attention if you have difficulty breathing, experience chest pain, have bluish lips or face, or you're unable to arouse or stay awake.

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