Frequently Asked Questions About COVID-19

What is coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory (breathing) illness caused by a novel (new) coronavirus that was first identified during an outbreak in China.

Should I worry about getting COVID-19?

According to the New York State and New York City Departments of Health, the risk to the public remains low.

What are the symptoms?

The symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to the flu. They include fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

I have symptoms, should I go to the doctor?

As recommended by the CDC, if you suspect you are infected, we recommend you seek medical care following the step-by-step guidance on the CDC website here: **https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/steps-when-sick.html**

How do I get tested?

Testing for COVID-19 is done only in collaboration with public health authorities. Mount Sinai collaborates with both the New York City and New York State health departments to determine who is tested. If you are concerned but do not have any symptoms like fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, testing is not recommended.

Which areas is COVID-19 prevalent in? Where do I need to be concerned about traveling?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention maintains the most current list of these countries at **https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html.**

Should I wear a mask to protect myself?

Not unless you are sick. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends the use of masks only for people who have symptoms of COVID-19 or other respiratory illnesses, such as cough and fever, and for those caring for individuals who have symptoms.

How can I protect myself?

- **Perform hand hygiene** either with alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60 percent alcohol) or soap and water.

- **Practice respiratory hygiene.** Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.

- **Don't touch your eyes, nose, or mouth,** especially with unwashed hands.

- **Avoid close contact** with people who are sick.

- **Clean and disinfect** frequently touched objects and surface.

- **Stay home** when you are sick.

Is it safe to come to Mount Sinai?

Yes, our first priority is always the safety of our patients. We are confident in the safety of our facilities and want to reiterate that there is no increased risk to our patients because of the case this weekend. Mount Sinai is open and all appointments, classes, and events are scheduled as normal.

We do ask that if you have respiratory symptoms like coughing, please consider rescheduling nonessential appointments, and call ahead to let your doctor's office know about your symptoms. This will help us keep everybody safe.

I want to know more; what are good sources of information?

The best resource for information on the virus is on the CDC website at **www.cdc.gov.** The CDC provides useful information including frequently asked questions and travel guidance. More information is also available at **mountsinai.org/covid19.**

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