



Ministry of Tribal Affairs
Government of India

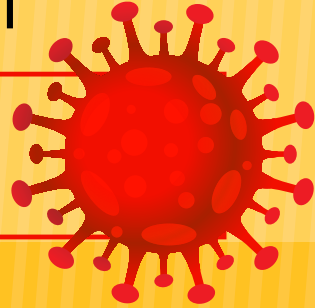
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*Van Dhan Samajik Doori
Jagrookta Abhiyaan*

Frequently Asked Questions on

COVID-19



As per guidelines issued by Government of India
and digital contents received from MoHFW

ABOUT COVID-19

1 What is coronavirus?

A Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses which may cause illness in animals or humans. In humans, several Coronaviruses are known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). The most recently discovered Coronavirus is called as Novel Coronavirus or SARS-CoV-2 and this virus causes the Coronavirus disease which in short is called as COVID-19.

2 What is COVID-19?

A COVID-19 is the infectious disease (Coronavirus Disease first seen in 2019) caused by the most recently discovered Coronavirus. This new virus and disease were unknown before its outbreak in China in December 2019.

3 How many days does it take to know that you are infected with this virus?/ How long is the incubation period for COVID-19?

A The “incubation period” means the time between catching the virus and beginning to have symptoms of the disease. Most estimates of the incubation period for COVID-19 range from 1-14 days, most commonly around five days. These estimates will be updated as more data become available.

4 What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

A The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, cough and difficulty in breathing. Some patients may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat or diarrhea. These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually. Some people become infected but don't develop any symptoms and don't feel unwell. Most people (about 80%) recover from the disease without needing special treatment. Around 1 out of every 6 people who gets COVID-19 becomes seriously ill and develops difficulty breathing. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes, are more likely to develop serious illness. People with fever, cough and difficulty breathing should seek medical attention.

5 How do you differentiate between seasonal cold and cough and coronavirus?

A Symptoms of seasonal influenza and COVID infections may be similar, and differentiation is possible after getting the laboratory test conducted for confirmation

Although, seasonal cough and cold (seasonal influenza) is milder than COVID-19. Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough and shortness of breath with a history of contact with positive patients or fomites. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia or breathing difficulties. More rarely, the disease can be fatal.

In any case, if you have fever, cough and difficulty in breathing, seek medical care early to reduce the risk of developing a more severe infection and be sure to share your recent travel history with your health care provider.

INFECTION AND PREVENTION

6 How does COVID-19 spread?

A People can catch COVID-19 from others who are infected with the virus. The disease can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth which are spread when a person with COVID-19 coughs, sneeze or exhales. These droplets land on objects and surfaces around the person. Other people then catch COVID-19 by touching these objects or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose or mouth. Therefore it is important to wash your hands with soap and water regularly. Also avoid touching your face.

People can also catch COVID-19 if they breathe in droplets from a person with COVID-19 who coughs out or exhales droplets. This is why it is important to stay more than 1 meter (3 feet) away from from people and avoid crowded places. Remember that a person may not show symptoms but can still transmit the virus.

7 What can I do to protect myself from this disease?

A Protection measures for everyone:
Stay aware of the latest information on the COVID-19 outbreak, available on the national, state and local public health authority. You can reduce your chances of being

infected or spreading COVID- 19 by taking some simple precautions:

- Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands by washing them with soap and water for atleast 20 seconds or sanitizing with 70% alcohol- based hand. (Any bathing soap or handwash soap can be used) Why? Washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub kills viruses that may be on your hands.
- Maintain at least 1 metre distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing Why? When someone coughs or sneezes, they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth which may contain virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus if the person coughing has the disease.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth. Why? Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and can make you sick.
- Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately. Why? Droplets spread virus. By following good respiratory hygiene you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19.
- Stay home if you feel unwell. If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention and call in advance. Follow the directions of your local health authority. Why? National and local authorities will have the most up to date information on the situation in your area. Calling in advance will allow your health care provider to quickly direct you to the right health facility. This will also protect you and help prevent spread of viruses and other infections.
- Keep up to date on the latest COVID-19 hotspots (cities or local areas where COVID-19 is spreading widely). If possible, avoid traveling to places – especially if you are an older person or have diabetes, heart or lung disease. Why? You have a higher chance of catching COVID-19 in one of these areas.

8 Can COVID-19 spread through air?

A Studies to date suggest that the virus that causes COVID-19 is mainly transmitted through contact with respiratory droplets rather than through the air. See previous answer on "How does COVID-19 spread?"

9 Can this virus be transmitted through water, lakes, ponds or tubewells?

A There is no evidence to support the transmission of the virus through water sources.

10 Can coronavirus be spread by pets and livestock and other animals?

A While there have been few known instances of animals being infected (the only known cases are a dog in Hong Kong and a tiger in Bronx, New York City), to date, there is no evidence that a dog, cat or any pet can transmit COVID-19. COVID-19 is mainly spread through droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or speaks. To protect yourself, such as when visiting live animal markets, avoid direct contact with animals and surfaces in contact with animals.

However, as this is a new virus, new information emerges regarding this on a regular basis. You are advised to keep updated with such information using trusted sources: MoHFW, NCDC, WHO, UNICEF,. As a precaution, clean your hands frequently and thoroughly after interaction with pets or livestock.

It is better to stay away from animals to avoid spreading the virus reversely in animals.

11 Can humans become infected with the COVID-19 from an animal source (meat/fish)?

A There is no evidence to suggest that consuming meat or fish can lead to COVID-19. Ensure good food safety practices at all times. Handle raw meat, milk or animal organs with care to avoid contamination of uncooked foods and avoid consuming raw or undercooked animal products.

12 How long does the virus survive on surfaces? Does the virus survive on trees/ plants and if yes, for how long?

A It is not certain how long the virus that causes COVID-19 survives on surfaces, but it seems to behave like other Coronaviruses. Studies suggest that Coronaviruses (including preliminary information on the COVID-19 virus) may persist on surfaces for a few hours or up to several days. This may vary under different conditions (e.g. type of surface including trees or plants, mud or clothes, temperature or humidity of the environment).

If you think a surface may be infected, clean it with simple disinfectant to kill the virus and protect yourself and others. Clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water. Avoid touching your eyes, mouth, or nose.

13 What is social distancing?

A Social distancing, also called “physical distancing,” means keeping space between yourself and other people outside of your home. To practice social or physical distancing:

- Stay at least 1 meter away from other people
- Do not gather in groups
- Stay out of crowded places and avoid mass gatherings

When COVID-19 is spreading in your area, everyone should limit close contact with individuals outside your household in indoor and outdoor spaces. Since people can spread the virus before they know they are sick, it is important to stay away from others when possible, even if you have no symptoms.

Frequently Asked Questions on COVID-19 for Tribal population

14 Can a person walking alone on the road be infected with coronavirus?

A No, by simply walking alone on the road you cannot get Coronavirus. However, avoid touching any surfaces and if you touch any surface (like trees, leaves etc.), wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds after touching any surfaces. While you are in contact with surfaces, avoid touching your face.

15 Can drinking hot water prevent COVID-19?

A There is no evidence to support this. For more information refer to the answer on "What can I do to protect myself from this disease?"

16 How to handwash in areas without running water taps?

A There is no alternative to soap and water. So it is requested that soaps be provided to Tribal communities through TRIFED's network or other networks. If clean water is not available, try carrying water or using local knowledge for providing running water devices such as a Tippy Tap. (For more information refer to the guidelines on How to make a tippy tap: https://www.cdc.gov/cholera/pdf/posters/11_229310-K_tippy_tap_print.pdf)

17 How to teach a Tribal how much is 20 secs?

A Refer a 20 second or longer tribal song as a reminder for the time to wash hands.
Or, find local solution for the same.

18 What is safer? Sanitizer or Soap Water?

A It is always better to handwash with soap and water for atleast 20 seconds. Use sanitizers only in case soap and water are not available. If using a sanitizer, ensure that it has at least 70% alcohol content.

19 How to make alcohol-based sanitizer at home?

A Please refer to: **Guide to Local Production: WHO-recommended Handrub Formulations**
https://www.who.int/gpsc/5may/Guide_to_Local_Production.pdf

20 Can locally brewed liquor like mahua be used for sanitization?

A No. For a sanitizer to be effective it must have 70% alcohol content. The alcohol content in mahua is lower than 70%

21 How do we maintain footwear hygiene?

A Use separate footwear for working in the jungle and for home use. Wash feet immediately on reaching home. Do not use the outer footwear inside the house. Remove your footwear outside before entering the house.

22 How do we handle buying and selling using cash transactions?

A Always wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after handling any object from outside. Disposable gloves can also be used for handling cash. Remember never touch your face (eyes, nose, mouth) when you are handling objects/cash before first washing your hands with soap and water for atleast 20 seconds and

23 How do we handle fruits/vegetables and other packet purchases?

A COVID-19 is not thought to be transmissible via food, but it can stay on surfaces for several days, including packaging material for foods. It is necessary to take precautions during and after shopping.

During shopping:

1. Cover your face while shopping and never touch your face when you are outside.
2. Carry a separate outer bag, with an inner cloth bag to put in your packets and fruits.
3. Do not carry anything else like your mobile or purse in your hand. If possible carry a bottle of sanitizer.

After Shopping on reaching home

1. Leave the outer bag in the sun outside the house if possible. Carry the inner bags and take your items out in one place. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Clean all your packets with soap and water
3. Clean all your vegetables and fruits by immersing in solution of warm water and soda bicarb or baking soda for 30 minutes. Then washing with clean water, drying and storing.
4. All packaging material should be discarded in closed dustbins
5. Cloth bags should be washed in bleach solution
6. wash and clean your hands with soap and water
7. Always wash your hands with soap and water before cooking

Adapted from : <https://www.ndtv.com/health/coronavirus-tips-do-you-need-to-wash-groceries-heres-what-experts-have-to-say-2205439>

24 Will traditional medicines and practices like neem water bath prevent infection?

A While the Ministry of AYUSH has taken out guidelines to help in maintaining healthy lifestyle during the COVID Pandemic, there is no evidence to support that traditional medicines or practices can prevent the infection.

25 Does increase in temperature reduce spread of COVID-19?

A There is no evidence to suggest this. You can catch COVID-19, no matter how sunny or hot the weather is. Countries with hot weather have reported cases of COVID-19. To protect yourself, make sure you clean your hands frequently and thoroughly and avoid touching your eyes, mouth, and nose.

26 What should I do in case I think I have the infection?

A In case you have symptoms like fever with cough or difficulty in breathing, immediately contact helpline numbers 011-2397 8046 or 1075 or your local ASHA/ANM

All suspect/confirmed COVID-19 cases will be hospitalized and kept in isolation in dedicated COVID-19 hospitals/hospital blocks. Persons testing positive for COVID-19 will remain hospitalized till such time as two of their samples are tested negative as per discharge policy.

27 What is the all India helpline number for help and information on COVID-19 ?

A Anyone in India can call on the helpline number managed by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW): Government of India's 24x7 helpline numbers 1075 (Toll Free) | 011-23978046
Email to: ncov2019@gov.in , ncov2019@gmail.com

States also have specific helpline numbers: <https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/coronavirushelplinenummer.pdf>

28 What is the difference between quarantine and isolation?

A *Quarantine*
Quarantine is used to keep someone away from others who is not having any symptom but might have been exposed to COVID-19 positive patient. Someone in self-quarantine stays separated from others, and they limit movement outside as well as within home or current place. A person may have been exposed to the virus without knowing it (for example, when traveling or out in the community), or they could have the virus without feeling symptoms. Quarantine helps limit further spread of COVID-19.

Isolation

Isolation is used to separate sick people from healthy people. People who are in isolation should stay away as suggested by healthcare personnel home. If at home, anyone sick should separate themselves from others by staying in a specific "sick" bedroom or space and using a different bathroom (if possible).

29 If after being in quarantine for 14 days I feel that I have symptoms of cold should I get tested again?

A You will be under supervision during the entire process of quarantine and will be asked to go for testing if there is any kind of symptom.

30 Should I practice social distancing around family members also?

A Social distancing is recommended for when you step out of the house. If someone in your family has traveled back from a place that has a known COVID-19 outbreak, they should self-isolate for 14 days. If you have older people in the house, it is best to not let them be in close contact with family members who are stepping out of the house

31 If my neighbour is at home, how can I know he is COVID positive or not?

A Testing is the only conclusive way of confirming that someone is infected with COVID-19. Under all other circumstances, practicing social distancing is sufficient.

32 Should I wear mask to protect myself? Should healthy persons wear a mask?

A Mask should be worn by all who are having any flu-like symptom and it is must for those who are positive with COVID-19 infection.

Wear a mask if you are looking after someone who may have COVID-19. Disposable face mask can only be used once. If you are not ill or looking after someone who is ill then you are wasting a mask.

We advise rational use of medical masks to avoid unnecessary wastage of precious resources and mis-use of masks. The most effective ways to protect yourself and others against COVID-19 are: frequently clean your hands, cover your cough with the bend of elbow or tissue and maintain a distance of at least 1 meter from people who are coughing or sneezing

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has put-up two videos on 'use of reusable face cover'. Links of these videos are given. Such reusable face covers are recommended for healthy persons when they go out. (Also refer to the next question)

<https://youtu.be/pC6lKNdZZ8o>

<https://youtu.be/IJoXu0k4fIU>

33 What are the guidelines for making masks? What are the guidelines for making and using reusable masks?

A Please refer to: Advisory on use of Homemade Protective Cover for Face & Mouth <https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/Advisory&ManualonuseofHomemadeProtectiveCoverforFace&Mouth.pdf>

Advisory on use of Homemade Protective Cover for Face & Mouth (**Points to keep in mind**):

1. We are aware that social distancing and personal hygiene are keys to prevent COVID 19 infections. Certain countries have claimed benefits of homemade face cover for the general public. Such homemade face cover is a good method for maintaining personal hygiene. Such usage certainly will help in maintaining overall hygienic health conditions.

2. Therefore, it is suggested that such people who are not suffering from medical conditions or having breathing difficulties may use the handmade reusable face cover, particularly when they step out of their house. This will help in protecting the community at large.
3. This face cover is not recommended for either health workers or those working with or in contact with COVID 19 patients or are patients themselves as these categories of people are required to wear specified protective gear.
4. It is advised that two sets of such face covers be made so that one can be washed while the other is used. Hand washing would still remain essential criteria and hand should be washed before wearing the face cover. Such face covers should also not be thrown anywhere but kept safely, washed properly with soap and hot water and dried properly before they are used.
5. These face covers could be made out of clean cloth available at home, which needs to be thoroughly cleaned and washed before a face cover is stitched/made. The face cover should be prepared in such a manner that it can cover the mouth and nose completely and can be tied over the face easily.
6. There must not be a sharing of face covers and a face cover must be used by only one individual. So, in a family of several members, each member should have a separate face cover.

34 **The women in SHGs are not finding cloth to make masks as all cloth stores are closed. All the masks that they have made so far have been distributed. What should they do moving ahead?**

A Home made face covers could be made out of clean cloth available at home, which needs to be thoroughly cleaned and washed before a face cover is stitched/made. The face cover should be prepared in such a manner that it can cover the mouth and nose completely and can be tied over the face easily. For more information refer to:

<https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/Advisory&ManualonuseofHomemadeProtectiveCoverforFace&Mouth.pdf>

35 **Once the lockdown is over, what all precautions one should take after reaching home? How can we be sure that a person has not got the virus from anyone in office or on the way?**

A Lockdown was done to limit the spread of COVID-19 infection from infected persons to other healthy but susceptible persons.

Once lockdown is over, it is advised that one must continue to observe respiratory and hand hygiene and maintain social distance, avoid going to crowded places and transport until it is being declared that infection has been controlled.

36 **Is it true that because Tribals eat organic food and live in fresh air, they are protected from COVID-19?**

A No this is not true. People of all ages/ regions/communities can be infected by the new coronavirus. Older people, and people with pre-existing medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease) appear to be more vulnerable to becoming severely ill with the virus.

37 **People who have health related problems hesitate to share them with anyone. We request you to share information on steps to be taken in case any individual shows symptoms which are similar to those related to Coronavirus?**

A These are the actions that we can take to help people overcome hesitation/fears in sharing their health condition/ discussing symptoms:

Sensitize people and help them to understand that it is a simple infection and 80% of the cases are mild cases.

- Ask people to stay away from watching negative things on the TV and also fake news
- Help in giving hope and positive news to help people handle stress. Encourage the VDVK/ GAO BUDHA/ VILLAGE HEADMAN to amplify positive news
- Engage with local healers (Baigas/ Ojhas etc,) to talk with people to overcome difficult times.
- Publicly, use terms like people who have COVID-19 instead of "COVID-19 cases" or "victims". Similarly, use terms like people who may have COVID-19 instead of "suspected cases"

38 **If there are early symptoms of COVID-19 visible, what medications are prescribed?**

A There is no evidence that current medicine can prevent or cure the disease. We do not recommend self-medication with any medicines, including antibiotics, as a prevention measure or cure for COVID-19.

Testing and self-isolation is therefore recommended if you have any symptoms of COVID-19. Also, stay informed and follow the advice of the local health authorities including any restrictions put in place on travel, movement and gatherings.

39 **We have not spoken about Immunity System in this session, what is the role of strong immunity to combat COVID-19. Please Explain.**

A It is being observed that people with weak immunity may manifest severe grade of any infection, and this is being true here too. One who is chronically ill or on regular medication for any illnesses should strictly observe hand and respiratory hygiene and maintain distance and avoid crowded places and transport and should follow their physician advice for diet and hydration.

For detailed information regarding immunity boosting measures please refer to Ministry of AYUSH Ayurveda's immunity boosting measures for self care during COVID 19 crisis: <https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/ImmunityBoostingAYUSHAdvisory.pdf>

40 **What are ways in which healthy people can prevent themselves from getting this disease? Should they make some changes in their eating habits?**

A It is important to follow all preventive methods such as hand washing, social distancing and avoid touching face. Avoid leaving the house for any non-essential activities and avoid crowded places.

Eat healthy and freshly/ well cooked food.

41 What is recovery time for COVID-19?

A Using available preliminary data, the median time from onset to clinical recovery for mild cases is approximately 2 weeks and is 3-6 weeks for patients with severe or critical disease.

42 Once an infected person gets cured of COVID 19, will there be any reoccurrence from the same patient?

A There remains a lot of uncertainty, but experts say that it's likely the reports of patients who seemed to have recovered but then tested positive again were not examples of re-infection, but were cases where lingering infection was not detected by tests for a period of time.

Source: <https://time.com/5810454/coronavirus-immunity-reinfection/>

43 How can we collect NTFP in the Van Dhan Samooh in today's times?

A The principles of safe practices to follow in VDVKs remains the same: handwashing with soap and water for atleast 20secs, do not touch eyes, mouth, nose and maintain social distance of atleast 1mt.

