



## Important facts about Coronavirus

Fear is the frequent consequence of incomplete information, which leaves our minds to “fill in the rest.” Too often, we fill those blanks with scenarios of doom. (Our culture of the 24-hour news cycle doesn't help, with its never-ending political spin and conflicting information from uncertain sources.)

### Many people have no symptoms.

For 80% of people, coronavirus causes no symptoms or those of a mild flu, and symptoms may not show up for two weeks. So only a handful of confirmed cases can mean a lot of us are infected but don't know.

### Physical distancing helps.

Thankfully, there is a simple and proven public health strategy to stop the spread: keeping our physical distance from one another. As soon as all travel stopped, businesses closed, and people physically separated themselves in Wuhan, China—where the virus was first identified—the spread of the virus plummeted: from 2,700 new cases per day to just in just 20. Physical separation is disruptive socially and economically, but it works.

### Age and chronic disease.

Coronavirus is especially dangerous for those over 70 with a chronic disease. While many people may have no or mild symptoms, in 14% of cases it causes pneumonia, and in 5% that pneumonia can be severe. Death rates for people over age 80 are 14.8% compared with 0.2% for age 10 to 39; and 10.5% for those with cardiovascular disease compared to <1% for those with no chronic illness. This is very different from the 1918 flu epidemic, when young, healthy people were most at risk.