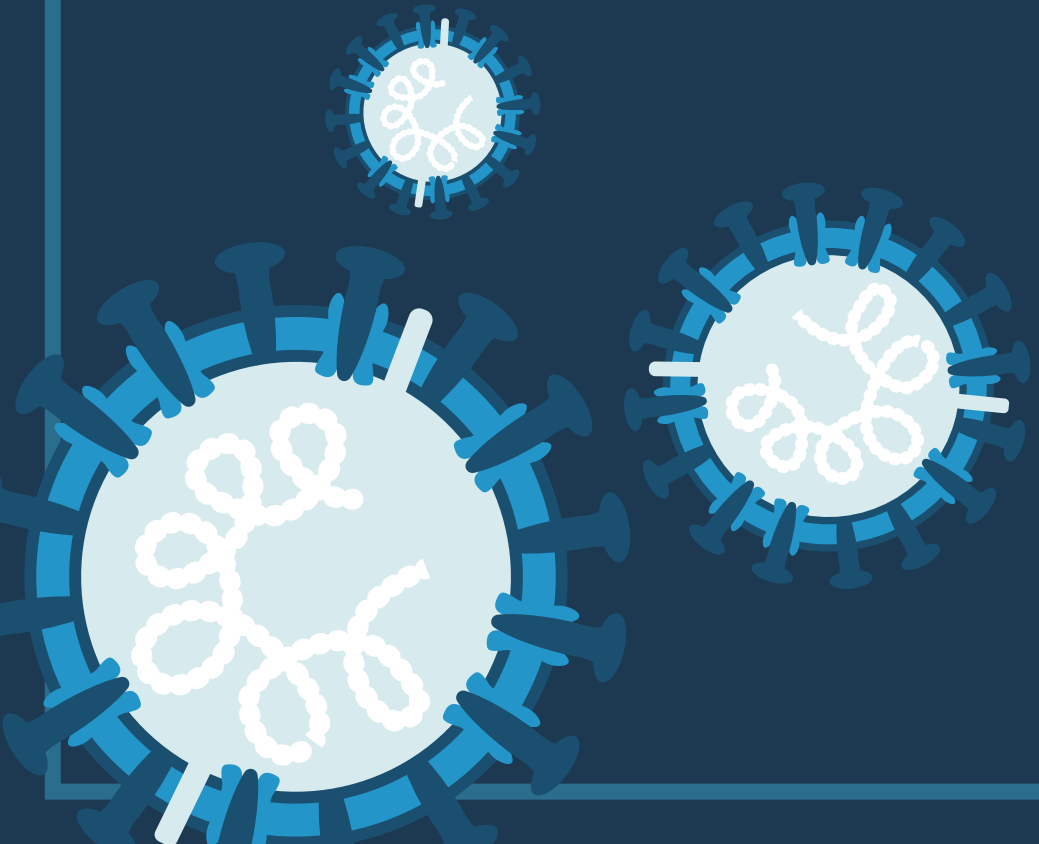


COVID-19

General information





For health related queries visit
covid19health.gov.mt



What are Coronaviruses?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that cause illnesses ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases. The virus responsible for causing COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

The most common symptoms are:



Fever



Headache



Cough



Sore throat

Other symptoms include: Runny/Blocked nose, sneezing, loss of smell, loss of taste, diarrhoea or vomiting, muscle pain, tiredness or shortness of breath

How long does it take for symptoms to develop?

The incubation period, the time between exposure to the virus and the appearance of the first symptoms, can take between 2-14 days.

How is COVID-19 coronavirus spread?

COVID-19 is spread from person to person through respiratory droplets expelled from the nose or mouth when a person who is sick with COVID-19 coughs or sneezes.

These droplets can persist on objects or surfaces around the person in question. An infection with the virus responsible for COVID-19 can occur if you touch these objects or surfaces and then touch your eyes, nose or mouth. COVID-19 can also be contracted by inhaling droplets from a sick person who has just coughed or sneezed. This is why it is important for a sick person to stay at home and to keep a distance of at least two metres from another person and to respect basic hygiene measures.

Is there treatment or a vaccine?

No specific treatment exists. Treatment given by a medical doctor is to control the symptoms. There are currently 4 vaccines which have been approved by the European Medicines Authority and others are in the process of being approved. Even if you are vaccinated, it is still important to maintain a physical distance of 2 metres from others, wear a mask, wash your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds and avoid meeting people outside your bubble. This is very important to prevent infection or contain further spread of an infection.

How do I protect myself?

To protect yourself and others, practice good hand and respiratory hygiene:

- ✓ Wash your hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, and if not available, use alcohol-based hand disinfectant.
- ✓ Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or inner side of flexed elbow when coughing or sneezing. Throw used tissues in the bin immediately.
- ✓ DO NOT sneeze or cough into your hands as you may contaminate objects or people that you touch.
- ✓ Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth before washing your hands.
- ✓ Keep a distance of two metres from others.
- ✓ Stay at home as much as possible. Avoid crowds and going to places where you come in close contact with other people.
- ✓ Stay away from vulnerable individuals, such as elderly and those with underlying health conditions.



Should I wear a facemask or visor?

Any person shall, outside his residence, both when going to an indoor place and outdoors, wear a medical or cloth mask or visor in a proper manner covering the nose, mouth and chin of the person. This limits the spread of infection from infected individuals who may not know they are infected, who have not yet developed symptoms or who remain asymptomatic. As from 1st June, while on the beach, masks remain recommended but not obligatory. As from 1st July a person or a group of up to two (2) persons who are in possession of a vaccination certificate which is issued in that official form, and with regards a vaccine, recognised and approved by the Superintendent of Public Health, shall be exempt from wearing a mask.

What is quarantine?

Quarantine means self-isolation in your home, and not leaving for the 14-day period that you are required to isolate for. Do not allow visitors into your home. Those under quarantine should self-monitor their temperature twice daily.

Who needs to undergo mandatory quarantine?

Persons who are not in possession of a recognised vaccination certificate travelling from countries classified as red and persons authorised to travel from dark red countries or zones shall be required to submit themselves to a period of quarantine of 14 days in terms of article 2(1) of the Period of Quarantine Order. Quarantine on arrival applies to all persons except those to whom the exemptions in article 2 of LN 301 of 2021 apply (medical conditions with approval of public health authorities and children aged 11 or less). This period of quarantine needs to be followed at a quarantine hotel which is recognised as such by the Superintendent of Public Health. Residents coming from red countries and who have a permanent residence in Malta may apply to undergo quarantine at an alternative address if authorised by the Superintendent of Public Health.



For more information visit traveltomalta.gov.mt

Persons identified by the Public Health Authority as close contacts of confirmed cases will also be put under mandatory quarantine for 14 days.

People under quarantine (after having travelled or being close contacts) are liable to €3000 fine each time they are found in breach of order. For persons who have tested positive and contacts in the same household the fine is of €10,000.

Does this mean my family or other people I live with need to undergo quarantine?

Yes, the other members of the household have to undergo mandatory quarantine as well.

**For more guidance on quarantine visit
covid19health.gov.mt**

Why is staying at home very important?

Staying at home helps to protect your friends, colleagues and the wider community. It will also help to control the spread of the virus. This may be difficult or frustrating, but there are things that you can do to help make it easier. These include:

- ✓ Asking friends or family to drop off anything you need or order supplies online. Make sure any deliveries are left outside your home for you to collect.
- ✓ Keeping in touch with friends and family over the phone or through social media.
- ✓ Keeping yourself busy by cooking, reading, online learning and watching films.
- ✓ Taking online classes or courses to help you to exercise in your home.

What do I do if I develop symptoms?

If you develop any symptoms:

- ✓ Remain at home.
- ✓ DO NOT go to private clinics, emergency department, health centres, pharmacies or other healthcare facilities.
- ✓ Phone your doctor and call the Public Health Helpline on 111 to book a swab test.

People suffering from symptoms of COVID-19 are advised not to go to their doctor, health centre or the emergency department, but should register for a test on <https://covidtest.gov.mt> or call the **COVID-19 helpline on 111**. People with symptoms will be assessed on a case-by case basis prior to testing. Testing is done by appointment only.