Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and you

What is coronavirus disease 2019?
Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus that was first identified during an outbreak in Wuhan, China.

Can I get COVID-19?
Yes. COVID-19 is spreading from person to person in parts of the world. Risk of infection from the virus that causes COVID-19 is highest for people who are in close contact (for example, are in a household or same workplace) with people who have higher risk for severe infection. There also may be risk for people who have recently been to an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19.


The current list of global locations with cases of COVID-19 is available on CDC's web page at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/global-cases.html

How does COVID-19 spread?
The virus that causes COVID-19 probably emerged from an animal source. It is now spreading from person to person. The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another for a prolonged period (e.g., in a household or workplace). It also is spread through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can then land in the eyes, mouth, or nose of people who are nearby. If the droplets land on a surface, then the virus can live on it and then be transmitted to the eyes, mouth, or nose of people who touch the surface and then touch their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes. See the summary of the spread of COVID-19 by community size from https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/level-1.html.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?
Patients with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms. Some people experience mild or no symptoms, while others have severe illness. The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing

What are severe complications from this virus?
Some patients have severe illness, especially older adults and people of Asian descent, including Chinese people. Other at-risk groups include:

- People of Asian descent, including Chinese people
- People who live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19
- People who have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19
- People who have completed their COVID-19 vaccination
- People who have an underlying medical condition

People with severe illness may develop the following complications:

- Severe respiratory illness
- Multi-organ failure
- Death

How can I protect others from getting COVID-19?
Stay home when you are sick. Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. Don’t touch your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.

For more information: www.cdc.gov/COVID19