

## Human Coronaviruses

### What are Coronaviruses?

Human coronaviruses are common throughout the world and were first identified in the mid-1960s. Seven different coronaviruses, that scientists know of, can infect people and make them sick.

Common human coronaviruses, including types 229E, NL63, OC43, and HKU1, usually cause mild to moderate upper-respiratory tract illnesses, like the common cold. Most people get infected with these viruses at some point in their lives. These illnesses usually only last for a short amount of time. Human coronaviruses can sometimes cause lower-respiratory tract illnesses, such as pneumonia or bronchitis. This is more common in people with cardiopulmonary disease, people with weakened immune systems, infants, and older adults.

Two other human coronaviruses, MERS-CoV and SARS-CoV, have been known to frequently cause severe symptoms. MERS symptoms usually include fever, cough, and shortness of breath which often progress to pneumonia. About 3 or 4 out of every 10 patients reported with MERS have died. MERS cases continue to occur, primarily in the Arabian Peninsula. SARS symptoms often included fever, chills, and body aches which usually progressed to pneumonia. No human cases of SARS have been reported anywhere in the world since 2004. In December 2019, a new (or novel) human coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) type emerged in China.

### Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

At this time, it's unclear how easily this virus is spreading between people. Patients with confirmed COVID-19 infection have reportedly had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of fever, cough, and shortness of breath appearing anywhere from 2 to 14 days after exposure.

This is an emerging, rapidly evolving situation. The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are providing updated information and guidance as it becomes available. For resources specific to Alabama, visit [Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-19\)](#). Visit the [CDC Coronavirus 2019 \(COVID-19\) website](#) for CDC updates and resources.

### How do coronaviruses present and who can perform testing?

Type	Signs and Symptoms	Exposure Locations	Testing Availability
229E	Common:	Worldwide	Clinical Laboratories
NL63	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Runny nose</li><li>• Headache</li></ul>		Commercial Laboratories
OC43	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cough</li><li>• Sore throat</li><li>• Fever</li><li>• A general feeling of being unwell</li></ul>		BCL
HKU1	Less common: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pneumonia</li><li>• Bronchitis</li></ul>		CDC
MERS-CoV	Common:	Arabian Peninsula	BCL

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fever</li> <li>• Cough</li> <li>• Shortness of breath</li> <li>• Pneumonia</li> </ul>		CDC
SARS-CoV	<p>Common:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fever</li> <li>• Chills</li> <li>• Body aches</li> <li>• Pneumonia</li> </ul>	None since 2004	CDC
<p>COVID-19 (aka SARS-CoV2 or 2019-nCoV)</p>	<p>Common:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fever</li> <li>• Cough</li> <li>• Shortness of breath</li> <li>• Pneumonia (in China)</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Affected geographic locations</a>	CDC