

If you get COVID-19, how long can you expect to be sick?

23 March 2020, by Nancy Clanton



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There are more than 11,000 confirmed cases of the coronavirus in the U.S., and nearly 300 in Georgia. That state number has been increasing by about 20% each day, which means the likelihood of being infected rises.

Many articles talk about the incubation time—how long it takes from when you're infected until you see symptoms—but few tell you how long COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus, will last.

Incubation: According to the World Health Organization, most estimates of the incubation period for COVID-19 range from 1-14 days, most commonly around five days. These estimates, WHO states, will be updated as more data becomes available.

Symptoms: The most [common symptoms](#), according to WHO and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, are fever, dry cough, and tiredness or shortness of breath. Ars Technica's list of symptoms is based on data from nearly 56,000 patients in China. It breaks down symptoms thusly:

- 88% had a fever
- 68% had a dry cough
- 38% had fatigue
- 33% coughed up phlegm
- 19% had shortness of breath
- 15% had joint or muscle pain
- 14% had a sore throat
- 14% headache
- 11% had chills
- 5% had nausea or vomiting
- 5% had nasal congestion
- 4% had diarrhea
- Less than 1% coughed up blood or blood-stained mucus
- Less than 1% had watery eyes

Illness length: From there, Ars Technica reports, the length of the disease depends on the severity. Those with a mild version tend to recover in about two weeks, while those with more severe cases can take three to six weeks to recover, according to WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, who goes by Dr. Tedros.

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