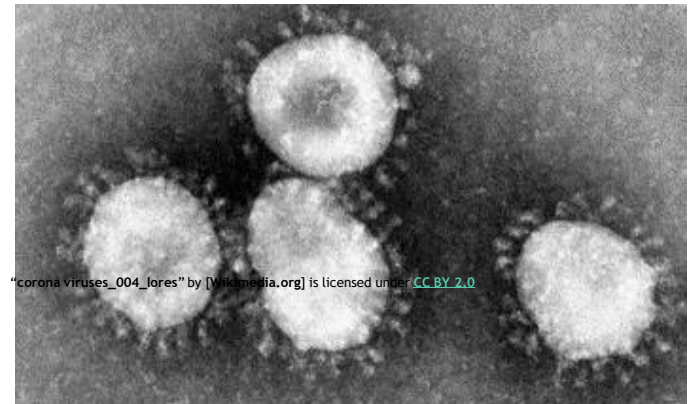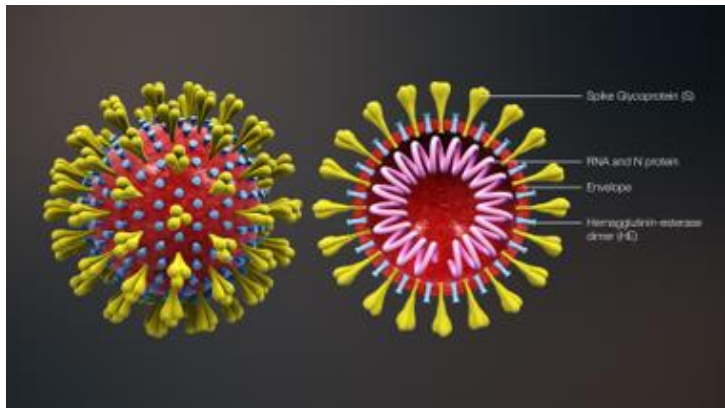# What Is a Coronavirus?

Coronavirus is the name of a family of viruses that are associated with the common cold. Most people will be infected with these viruses at some point in their lives.

Viruses live inside cells. They reproduce rapidly inside the cell, then burst out, causing damage to the cell. The new viruses then go on to infect further cells.

Coronaviruses get their name from the crown-like halo (corona) that is visible when the virus is viewed under an electron microscope.

What Is 2019-nCoV?

2019-nCov is the current name that has been given to a novel strain of coronavirus.

2019-nCoV

the year the virus was first identified	novel (new)	coronavirus – the family of viruses

The first cases were identified in December 2019 in Wuhan, a city in the Hubei province of China.

As of 1st March , 87, 024 cases of 2019-nCoV have been confirmed across the world

Coronaviruses are common in many different species of animals, including camels, cattle, cats and bats. In rare cases, animal coronaviruses can infect people.

It's not just coronaviruses that can be transmitted from animals to humans.
- HIV/AIDS originated in great apes.
- Avian flu originated in birds.
- Swine flu originated in pigs.
- Ebola originated in bats.

What Is 2019-nCoV?

Viruses usually spread from person-to-person through droplets that are produced when an infected person sneezes or coughs. Flu is also spread in this way.

Another way that flu is spread is by touching a surface that has the flu virus (influenza) on it.

Scientists still haven't confirmed how long Coronovirus can live on a surface but it isn't thought to be long

How Can We Prevent Infection?

As an Individual:

You can prevent the spread of a coronavirus infection in the same way that you can avoid infection with the common cold.

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with your hands, as this could allow viruses from surfaces you touch to enter the body.
- Avoid close contact with people who are infected.
- Stay home if you are ill.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue and throw it in the bin.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.

CATCH IT
Germs spread easily. Always carry tissues and use them to catch your cough or sneeze.

BIN IT
Germs can live for several hours on tissues. Dispose of your tissue as soon as possible.

KILL IT
Hands can transfer germs to every surface you touch. Clean your hands as soon as you can.

NHS

Symptoms

- a cough

- a high temperature

- shortness of breath

But these symptoms do not necessarily mean you have the illness. The symptoms are similar to other illnesses that are much more common, such as cold and flu.

Coronaviruses can sometimes cause pneumonia. This is more likely to happen in infants under the age of two, the elderly or vulnerable patients. Smoking is also a risk factor for pneumonia.

So far data shows Children seem to only be affected by the virus mildly

https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/children-faq.html

How Do You Treat a Virus?

Because viruses live inside cells, it is difficult to develop drugs that kill them without also damaging the body's tissues.

Antibiotics only kill bacteria, so they do not work on viruses.

The symptoms of a coronavirus infection can be treated in the same way you would treat a cold:

- Get plenty of rest.

- Drink lots of fluids.

- Use painkillers to treat symptoms.

Your questions answered

Coronavirus: Dr Chris answers YOUR questions

- https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/news/watch_newsround