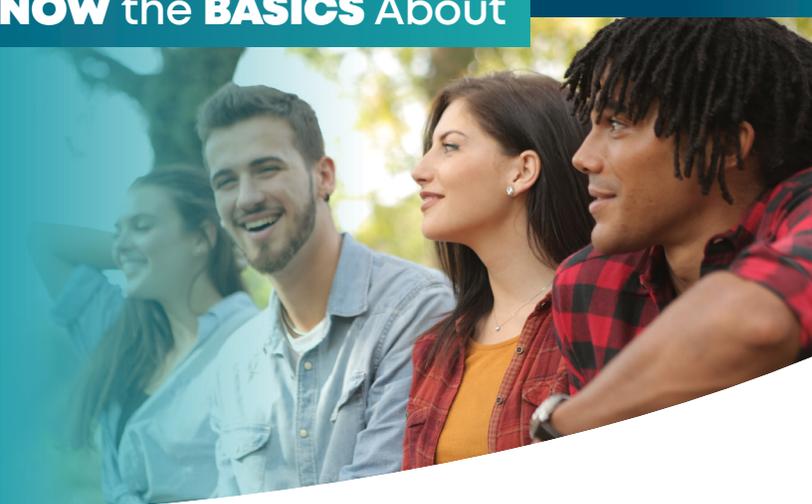


Should I get the coronavirus on purpose?



In short, the answer is NO.

Some people have been wondering if it's really that important for them to avoid getting infected with COVID-19. Some have even wondered if they should try to get infected. The thinking goes something like this: "I'm healthy. If I get infected, I probably won't get very sick. I'll get over it, and then I'll be immune."

You may get sicker than you think

Being healthy or young is no guarantee that you'll sail through this disease with no problem. The infection could make you very ill—so ill that you need to be treated in the hospital. And that would add strain to an already-stressed healthcare system.

You could cause other people to get sick

It can take up to 14 days for symptoms to start. Even before you know you're infected, you could spread the disease to other people—friends, family, coworkers, even people you casually come in contact with. Some of them could get very sick and need intensive care. And some could die.

It's not clear that you'll be immune

COVID-19 is a new virus, so we don't know very much about it yet. That includes whether having it one time means you won't get it again. That may not be the case. Think of the flu: Having it once doesn't mean you won't get it again. Like COVID-19, the flu is caused by a virus. Viruses change quickly. That's why the flu vaccine has to be adjusted from year to year, and it's why you need to get a flu shot every year.

If you have symptoms, are sick, or have had contact with someone who is:

- **Monitor your health.** If you start developing symptoms or have been exposed to COVID-19, call the COVID-19 Hotline (804-205-3501) to register to receive a free test.
- **Wear a facemask, bandana or scarf** (if over the age of 2) that covers your nose, mouth and chin.
- **Cover coughs and sneezes** with a tissue or the inside of your elbow.
- **Do not leave home** and avoid contact with others until fever-free for 72 hours (without the help of medication) AND at least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
- **Wash your hands often** with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. Clean and disinfect high touch surfaces every day.
- **Inform close contacts.** Talk to everyone who has been within 6 feet for more than a few minutes while you were sick, including the 48 hours BEFORE you developed symptoms.
- **Regularly clean 'high-touch' surfaces** such as doorknobs, counter tops, light switches, refrigerators, microwaves, remotes and tablets, and other surfaces often touched by people in the household.

