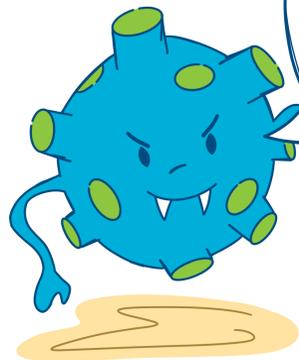


What's a Coronavirus?

Explaining COVID-19 to children



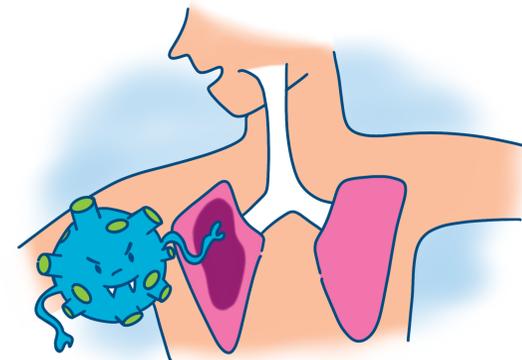
WorldYWCA



Hi. My name is COVID-19, but you can call me Coronavirus.

You've probably heard about me on the news. I'm a very contagious virus that can be very dangerous to certain people.

At first, people thought that I was just like a cold or a flu. But actually, I am an infectious disease. I cause infections in people's air passages, and make it hard for them to breathe.



You can see this as they start to have a fever; cough; feel very tired; have muscle aches; and other symptoms.

Some people are able to get rid of me just fine. Some people don't even know I've infected them.



But other people – like elderly people, people who already have certain health problems, people who smoke or are obese – have a harder time getting rid of me. Often, they end up needing very serious help in the hospital.



There are also people who seem perfectly healthy, and still have a hard time getting rid of me. We are still trying to figure out why this happens.



Many people don't need the hospital, but they still get very sick. They can't go to work, earn enough to buy food, keep their family safe... and these are all very big problems too.



So, here's what you need to know to stop this from happening...



HOW I TRAVEL

I travel through small droplets of saliva or nasal discharge (that's the stuff that comes out of your nose).



That means that every time someone who is infected coughs or sneezes, I leave their body and can land on, and infect, another person.

I can also land on a surface – like a table or a lamp. Depending on what that surface is made out of, I can survive on it for up to...



4 hours
on copper
(e.g. coins, pipes)

24 hours on
cardboard

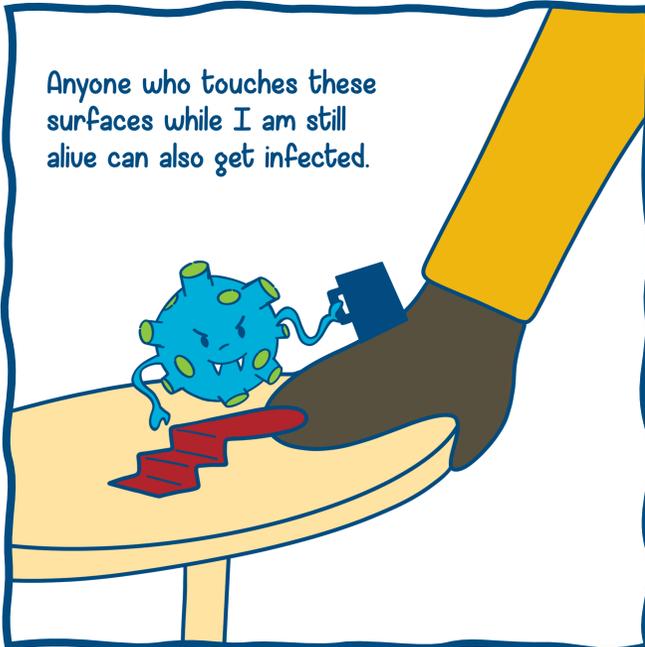


3 days
on plastic
(e.g. Tupperware,
most toys)

2-3 days on
stainless steel
(e.g. pans, railings)



Anyone who touches these surfaces while I am still alive can also get infected.



HOW TO STOP ME FROM TRAVELLING



If you cough or sneeze into your elbow, or into a mask, I have smaller chances of landing on another person, or on a surface that people might touch.

However, I can still travel if someone who is infected touches their nose or their mouth, and then touches another person or surface. That's why we're asking people to try and touch their face less, and wash their hands regularly.



You can also remove me from surfaces by cleaning them with disinfectant. If you don't have any of that, here's what else you can use:

Soap and water



1 teaspoon of bleach in 1 cup of water



Any alcohol that is 70% or stronger.*

*Just let it sit for 30 seconds minimum.



White vinegar.*

*Although we're not sure how well that works.



But the best way to get rid of me is to stay home. Why? Because if you stay home, you can't contaminate other people or surfaces outside of your home.

This is important even if you think that you aren't infected. Remember, some people don't even know that I've infected them, because they don't feel sick at all. But if they keep on traveling and seeing people, so do I.



That's why in the news, you're also hearing about shops, schools and other places being closed. It's to encourage people to travel less, so that I travel less. And you can help with that, too.



Staying home can be difficult or lonely for some people. That's why you can also help by being extra kind – to the people around you, and to the people far away from you.



This can also be a confusing and scary time. You might hear a lot of things or have a lot of questions.



Remember that you can always talk to your parents and ask them to get the right information for you (e.g. from the World Health Organisation).



And before you know it, you will be back outside and I won't be on the news anymore.