

Frequently Asked Questions about Covid-19

Question 1: What is the JN.1 variant of Covid-19?

Answer: JN.1 is the latest COVID-19 variant in India. Two sub-variants are reported LF.7 & NB.1.8 which account for 70% cases. Apart from India, cases have been reported from Singapore, Hongkong & Thailand. Over 1000 cases of Covid-19 were reported in India just last week. Kerala has recorded the highest number of Covid-19 cases at 403. Mumbai follows with 209 cases & Delhi registered 104 so far.



Question 2: I have come in contact with a corona positive patient. What are my chances of getting infected?

Answer: It depends on whether either or both of you were wearing mask, what was the distance between the two and how long you were in contact. Duration of contact is called "Contact time". In Covid, contact time for transmission of infection is 15 min. So, if you have been in contact with a person for less than 15 min, and either of you is wearing a mask and distance is at least 6 feet, chances of infection are very less.

Question 3: How long after a contact, should I get tested for corona virus?

Answer: Incubation period of Covid is 2-14 days (mean=5 days). Hence, you should get tested after 5 days

Question 4: I am having symptoms of fever or respiratory infection. When should I be tested for Covid?

In present day scenario, such a patient should be tested immediately.

Symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Know the symptoms of COVID-19, which can include the following:



Symptoms can range from mild to severe illness, and appear 2–14 days after you are exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

Question 5: What are the tests to diagnose Covid 19?

- I. **RT PCR** (reverse transcriptase polymerase chain reaction): This is the gold standard test. Best is nasopharyngeal sample. Nasal swabs or oro-pharyngeal swabs are acceptable alternatives. The report is available within 48 hours.
- II. **Trunet**: This is the same machine which is used for TB. Report is available in 4 hrs.
- III. **Gene Expert**: This is not available in India. Report is available in 4 hrs.
- IV. **Rapid antigen test**: Report is available in 15-20 min. Sensitivity is 40-50%. A negative test needs to be confirmed by RT-PCR
- V. **Covid serology**: This is not used for diagnosis. Its usefulness is in sero surveys in general population

Question 6: What is the role of Favipiravir?

Studies have used Favipiravir mainly in mild or asymptomatic COVID, claiming to prevent progression, whereas majority of this cohort recover with just supportive care and monitoring and usually require no specific therapy. Evidence is weak for the use of Favipiravir and is currently not recommended in national guidelines

Question 7: What is the role of Tocilizumab?

Tocilizumab had been approved by DCGI on compassionate ground in view of ongoing pandemic. However, it is an experimental therapy, has a limited role, and should be used only in patients with cytokine syndrome after ruling out active infections.

Question 8: What is the role of Plasma therapy?

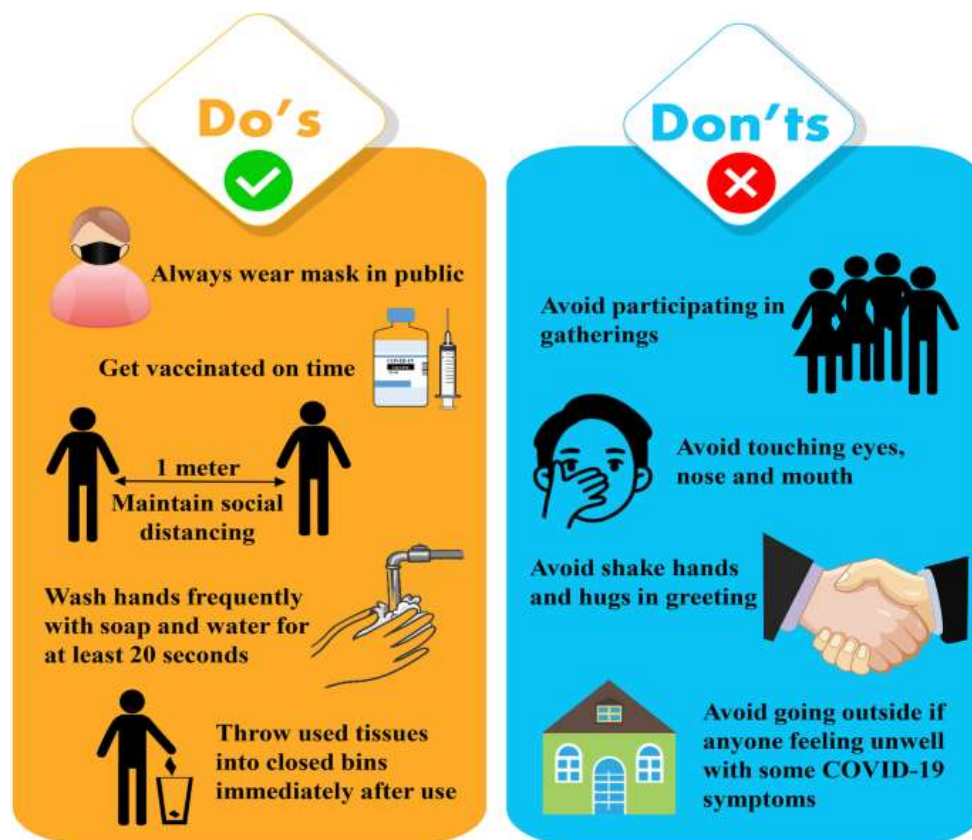
Convalescent plasma collected from ABO matched donors with high neutralizing titers can be given to patients at risk of developing severe COVID in early stages of the disease. However, it should also be considered an experimental therapy and should be used with caution.

Question 9: How to prevent depression in COVID 19 patients?

Depression is a common finding in patients with COVID which may be because of number of reasons including staying in isolation, anxiety related to disease, social stigma, among others. Such patients need empathy and psychological counseling preferably by a trained HCW like a psychologist / psychiatrist.

Question 10: What percentage of patients with COVID-19 need to be hospitalized?

Most people (about 80%) recover from the disease without needing special treatment, and for the majority – especially for children and young adults – illness due to COVID-19 is generally minor. However, for some people it can cause serious illness. Around 1 in every 5 people who are infected with COVID-19 develops difficulty in breathing and requires hospital care. People who are aged over 60 years, and people who have underlying medical conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, respiratory disease or hypertension are among those who are at greater risk.



Question 11: Should relatives be allowed to visit COVID-19 patients admitted in the Hospitals?

No, relatives are not allowed to visit COVID-19 patients as they have chances to get infected and transfer it to the community.

Question 12: Can parents be allowed to stay with COVID-19 positive children?

Parents can stay with the children after explaining the risk and taking consent for the same.

Question 13: What is the recovery time for the Covid - 19?

Although for most people COVID-19 causes only mild illness, it can make some people very ill. More rarely, the disease can be fatal. Older people, and those with pre-existing medical conditions (such as high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes) appear to be more vulnerable

Question 14: What should a patient suffering from Covid -19 eat?

You should eat a variety of fresh and unprocessed foods every day to get the vitamins, minerals, dietary fiber, protein and antioxidants your body needs. Drink enough water. Eat fruits, vegetables, legumes (e.g. lentils, beans), nuts and foods from animal sources (e.g. meat, fish, eggs and milk). For snacks, choose raw vegetables and fresh fruit rather than foods that are high in sugar, fat or salt.

Question 15: Does eating garlic or adding pepper to food prevent COVID-19?

Garlic is a healthy food that may have some antimicrobial properties. However, there is no evidence from the current outbreak that eating garlic has protected people from the new corona virus. Similarly Hot peppers in your food, though very tasty, cannot prevent or cure COVID-19. The best way to protect yourself against the new corona virus is to keep at least 1 meter away from others and to wash your hands frequently and thoroughly. It is also beneficial for your general health to maintain a balanced diet, stay well hydrated, exercise regularly and sleep well.

Question 16: What is the difference between of Quarantine, Isolation & Physical distancing?

- **Quarantine** means restricting activities or separating people who are not ill themselves but may have been exposed to COVID-19. The goal is to prevent spread of the disease at the time when people just develop symptoms.
- **Isolation** means separating people who are ill with symptoms of COVID-19 and may be infectious to prevent the spread of the disease.
- **Physical distancing** means being physically apart. WHO recommends keeping at least 1-metre distance from others. This is a general measure that everyone should take even if they are well with no known exposure to COVID-19.

Question 17: Can children and adolescents be also affected by Covid -19?

Children and adolescents are just as likely to become infected as any other age group and can spread the disease. Evidence to date suggests that children and young adults are less likely to get severe disease, but severe cases can still happen in these age groups. Children and adults should follow the same guidance on self-quarantine and self-isolation if there is a risk they have been exposed or are showing symptoms. It is particularly important that children avoid contact with older people and others who are at risk of more severe disease.

Question 18: How long can the virus survive on the surface?

The most important thing to know about corona virus on surfaces is that they can easily be cleaned with common household disinfectants that will kill the virus. Studies have shown that the COVID-19 virus can survive for up to 72 hours on plastic and stainless steel, less than 4 hours on copper and less than 24 hours on cardboard.

Question 19: Why are Antibiotics prescribed to treat Covid -19 when it is a viral infection?

It's true that Antibiotics do not work against viruses; they only work on bacterial infections. Physicians will sometimes use antibiotics to prevent or treat secondary bacterial infections which can be a complication of COVID-19 in severely ill patients. However the most frequently prescribed antibiotic for Covid is AZEE or Azithromycin, as it also has some anti viral as well as immune-modulator properties, both of which are potentially beneficial in infections like Covid.

Question 20: When should I get a repeat RT-PCR test to confirm that I have recovered from Covid-19?

As per the current guidelines of ICMR & MoHFW, a repeat RT-PCR test is not recommended. You may consider yourself cured when there is no fever for more than 72 hours & the oxygen saturation (measured by a pulse Oxymeter) is more than 95%. However as per the current guidelines your quarantine period shall be over only after 17 days from the start of your diagnosis

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Thanks & Regards,
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