



THE COVID-19

WHAT IS COVID-19?

WHAT IS A VIRUS?

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN

The Covid-19 disease is spreading around the world like wildfire (rapidly). More than 200,000 people have already been infected. A state of health emergency has been declared in Quebec. Schools, CEGEPs and universities have been closed since March 13. The goal: to stop the spread of the virus that causes the disease. Le Curieux will explain everything.

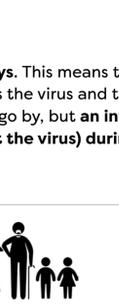
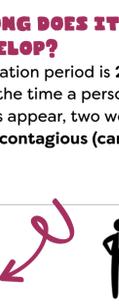
1 WHAT IS COVID-19?

Covid-19 is a novel (never seen before) disease in humans. It develops in people who are infected with a new coronavirus. Coronaviruses cause illnesses ranging from colds to severe lung diseases.



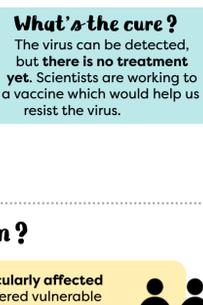
THE SYMPTOMS:

They look a lot like the flu symptoms:



HOW IS IT TRANSMITTED?

This virus is transmitted by droplets when you sneeze or blow your nose, for example. So, it's very easy to transmit the Covid-19 by shaking hands with someone who's infected, or giving him or her hugs and kisses ... The droplets can also be left on door handles or objects. The virus remains «alive» there from a few hours to several days.

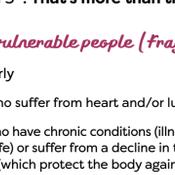


HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO DEVELOP?

2 to 14 DAYS

The incubation period is 2 to 14 days. This means that between the time a person catches the virus and the first symptoms appear, two weeks may go by, but an infected person is contagious (can transmit the virus) during this period.

WHO CAN BE AFFECTED?



Anyone can get the virus and develop the Covid-19 disease. Sometimes there are no symptoms. In most cases (80-85%), they are mild (not very serious). But sometimes, it is possible to die from it. The mortality rate (the number of people infected with the virus who died) is less than 3%. That's more than the flu (0.4%).



The most vulnerable people (fragile) are:

- ✦ The elderly
- ✦ People who suffer from heart and/or lung disease
- ✦ People who have chronic conditions (illnesses that people have for life) or suffer from a decline in their immune defenses (which protect the body against diseases).

Infected people with few symptoms can infect individuals for who the disease will be severe.

What's the cure?
The virus can be detected, but there is no treatment yet. Scientists are working to develop a vaccine which would help us resist the virus.



What about children?

Above all, children are not particularly affected by the virus. They are not considered vulnerable (fragile). But because schools and day-care centres are home to many children, they have closed down to prevent the virus from spreading.



HOW DID IT APPEAR?

The virus appeared in Wuhan, China, in December 2019 in a food market. The virus was initially (at first) in an animal. It then spread to humans. Scientists believe that the virus was first found in bats. It is said to be the animal reservoir. But another animal like the pangolin could have transmitted it to humans. This is a mammal covered in scales that is eaten in China.



AND TODAY?

The World Health Organization (WHO) announced the coronavirus as a pandemic on March 11.

THAT IS A PANDEMIC

PANDEMIC status is triggered when an epidemic spreads over a large area or even the entire world. An **EPIDEMIC** is the rapid spread of disease in a region.



In the world

Today, the COVID-19 has killed 20,500 people in 189 countries and territories around the world. More than 450,000 people have been infected by the virus.*

450,000 CONFIRMED CASES ALL OVER THE WORLD

20,500 DEATHS **189 COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES**

3,289 CONFIRMED CASES
30 DEATHS
CANADA

1,339 CONFIRMED CASES
6 DEATHS
QUEBEC

Most affected countries:

CHINA

ITALY

IRAN

WHAT IS A VIRUS?



Caroline Quach-Thanh, microbiologist and infectiologist at the Mother and child university hospital center (CHU) Sainte-Justine.

What is a virus?

It's a small particle that can't live on its own. It's taking over cells completely. But it is possible to limit it, i.e. to reduce the number of people infected.

In the case of Covid-19, it's the cells in the throat, nose and bronchial tubes (the conduit through which air travels to the lungs) that are affected.



What causes people to die from Covid-19?

The immune system protects the body from viruses: when it is attacked, it gets rid of them.

In the case of Covid-19, in some people, the inflammatory system reacts too strongly to the unknown virus. It causes complications, like pneumonia. That's what people die of.



Why is the epidemic spreading so fast?

The virus spreads like a cold. So, it spreads easily.

Also, because it is a new virus, no one is immune (protected) against it. We are therefore all more vulnerable.

Finally, the fact that people travel a lot speeds up the spread of the virus around the world. In the 1930s, it would have developed at a slower rate.



DID YOU KNOW THAT...?

A virus can't be seen with the naked eye. It's even smaller than a bacterium. Yet a bacterium is 1,000 times smaller than a millimeter.

HOW DO YOU FIGHT THE VIRUS?

It seems difficult to stop the spread of the virus completely. But it is possible to limit it, i.e. to reduce the number of people infected.

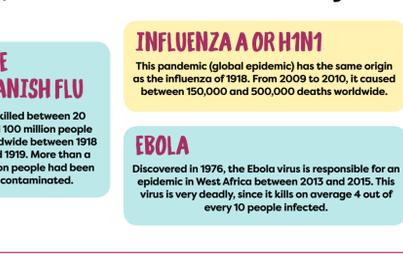
That is why the governments of the various countries have put in place strict prevention measures.

The sole aim of all these decisions is to avoid physical contact between inhabitants as much as possible to avoid transmitting the virus. In Quebec, gatherings of more than 250 people have been banned and schools closed for this purpose.



Vulnerable people are particularly protected. For this reason, visits to centres that accommodate the elderly are prohibited. People over 70 years of age are also advised to stay at home.

Travellers must also put themselves in voluntary isolation in case they caught the virus abroad. This means staying at home for two weeks and limiting contact with others.

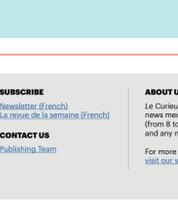


DID YOU KNOW?
Sophie Grégoire, wife of Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, is infected. They both have to stay home to avoid infecting others.



Sense of panic

The exceptional measures that have been taken by governments have created anxiety among the population. Many have rushed (went quickly) to the supermarkets to stock up on provisions in case they have to stay confined (locked up) at home...



Shortages of several items have appeared: hydroalcoholic gel (disinfectant), masks and even... toilet paper!

Should you panic?

The contagiousness rate (the number of people a sick person can infect) is lower than other viruses already known in the world. With Covid-19, each sick person will infect an average between 1.4 and 2.5 new people compared to 12 and 2.5 new people for measles, for example.

The mortality rate (the number of infected people who die) is very low among the young but it increases among the elderly.

It is very important to avoid contact and to follow hygiene recommendations to avoid the risk of contaminating vulnerable people.

But panicking is useless. Vulnerable people need to be more careful and we need to be more careful to protect them. Healthy people who are no older than 70 years of age are unlikely to have serious symptoms.

3 ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN

Everyone has a role to play in limiting the spread (large-scale contamination) of the virus.

BY FOLLOWING THESE FEW SIMPLE RULES, THE RISKS ARE STRONGLY LIMITED.

Wash your hands often with warm running water and soap for at least 20 seconds.

If you cannot wash your hands, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

If you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with your arm to reduce the spread (dispersal) of germs (microbes).

Use a single-use tissue (Kleenex), dispose of it as soon as possible and wash your hands afterwards.

Avoid touching your face, especially with unwashed hands.

Avoid physical contact within 2 metres.

Be careful!
Masks are not an effective protection tool for everyone. They are used by patients who are already ill or by the health professionals who care for them.

