

FROM: Chenango County Health Department

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## The Importance of Knowing Signs and Symptoms of COVID-19

Over the past month, our contact tracing team has reported that many of our new coronavirus cases had classic signs and symptoms of the disease before being identified as having the disease. A large percentage of those patients admitted to feeling badly but continued to go out in public, attend functions, see friends, and go to work. Although some cases of coronavirus are spread by asymptomatic patients (having no apparent symptoms), we have noticed that others ignore obvious signs of illness. We want to urge residents to be mindful of their health and seek medical attention quickly if you feel sick. It is very important for individuals to be aware of the signs and symptoms if we are to contain the virus in our local community.

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Some of the symptoms are bizarre and you may notice something out of the ordinary. Most of the time the symptoms appear in combination with more than one other symptom on the list. Symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure to the virus**. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Loss of taste or smell
- Fever and chills
- Dry persistent cough
- Shortness of breath and difficulty breathing
- Overwhelming exhaustion
- Muscle and body aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea

If you are feeling any of the signs of illness please reach out to your medical provider. **DO NOT IGNORE CLEAR SIGNS THAT YOU MAY BE SICK.** More importantly, stay home if you are sick. A large percentage of those patients that have been diagnosed with coronavirus over the last month have become very ill. They have reported shortness of breath, fevers, loss of taste and smell along with lingering exhaustion past their two-week isolation time. There are other individuals that experience more mild symptoms, but a large majority of the current cases feel sick.

Keep in mind that it is also important to look for emergency warning signs for COVID-19. If someone is showing any of these signs, seek emergency medical care immediately or call 911:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

We want to stress the importance of continuing to social distance while in a group setting, gathering, or out in public. Always take steps to protect yourself and your health. We cannot control what others do but we can take responsibility for ourselves and do the best we can to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Social distance from others, wear a mask and wash your hands often. Please be aware, stay informed and stay safe.

Thank you!