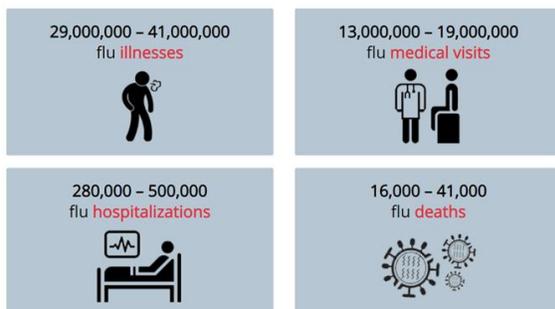
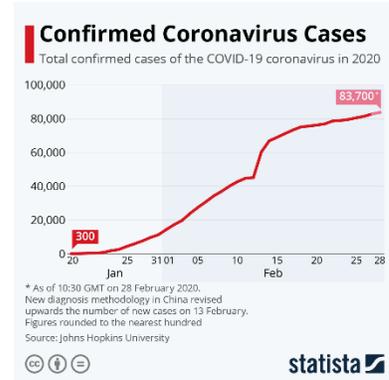


Novel Corona Virus SARS-CoV-2/2019-nCoV, the virus that causes COVID-19

Coronaviruses (CoV) are a family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV). The spikes on the surface of coronaviruses give this virus family its name corona, which is Latin for “crown.” Additionally, Coronaviruses are classified as zoonotic, meaning they are transmitted between animals and humans (1).

As of February 28, 2020, there are 83,700 confirmed cases of COVID-19 globally (2). The number of new COVID-19 infections outside China has outpaced those inside the country for the first time, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). However, the WHO has stopped short of calling it a Pandemic (prevalent over a whole country or world). According to the WHO “Using the word pandemic carelessly has no tangible benefit, but it does have significant risk in terms of amplifying unnecessary and unjustified fear and stigma, and paralyzing systems”, they continued by stating. “It may also signal that we can no longer contain the virus, which is not true. (3)



It is important to remember that while this new emerging infectious disease has the world’s attention, we need to be careful and place it in the proper context. For example, Influenza kills globally anywhere from 250,000 to 600,000 people annually. In the US, it kills on average between 12,000 to 61,000 annually and this season is projected (from early estimates) to kill between 16,000 to 41,000 (4).

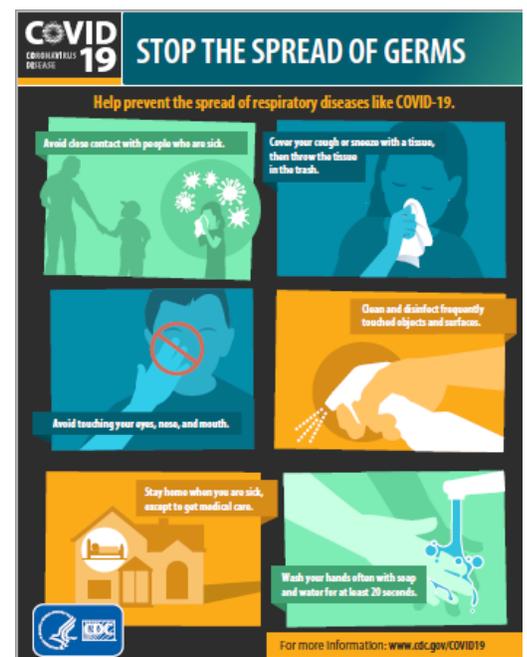
Common signs of infection include respiratory symptoms:

- Fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties.
- In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, kidney failure and even death.

Standard recommendations to prevent infection spread include:

- Regular hand washing,
- Covering mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing,
- Thoroughly cooking meat and eggs.
- Avoid close contact with anyone showing symptoms of respiratory illness such as coughing and sneezing (5).

Graphic Right Provided Courtesy of CDC (6)



References

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2. <https://www.statista.com/chart/20634/confirmed-coronavirus-cases-timeline/>
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