

Shared January 12, 2022

- Q1: Given that supplies of treatment like Pavloxiid are limited, how is the health department focusing its efforts to reduce community transmission, and thus demand for treatment? One thing I have noticed is very little understanding of airborne transmission and how to mitigate it in the community. WHO has updated their FAQ within the past month to place emphasis on airborne (inhaled aerosol) transmission to point out it is common close to others, not just far apart inside buildings.

A1: Reducing community transmission of COVID-19 is critically important to reduce the number of people who are exposed, become infected and develop severe illness. COVID-19 is spread in three main ways:

- Breathing in air when close to an infected person who is exhaling small droplets and particles that contain the virus.
- Having these small droplets and particles that contain virus land on the eyes, nose, or mouth, especially through splashes and sprays like a cough or sneeze.
- Touching eyes, nose, or mouth with hands that have the virus on them.

To reduce transmission of this virus in the community, people should wear well-fitting masks consistently when around those they do not live with, bring in as much fresh air in to indoor spaces, and avoid crowds and poorly ventilated spaces.

- Q2: what if the exposure is at home, positive spouse/kids but you are negative. How long are you to quarantine?

A2: Recommendations for who should quarantine and for how long can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html>. These recommendations depend on whether or not the person is up-to-date on their COVID-19 vaccinations including booster doses.

- Q3: If Omicron is less severe, which variant is presented across admissions?

A3: Current data shows that over 93% of specimens sequenced are the Omicron variant. Data about the severity of illness due to Omicron is still emerging. People can still experience severe illness and die as a result of infection with the Omicron variant. Being up-to-date with your COVID-19 vaccines including boosters is the best way to protect yourself against severe disease or death from COVID-19. Kara, what was the name of your Coalition again, please? Sounds amazing!

- Q4: Are the Korean KF94 masks comparable in protection to the Chinese KN95 masks?

A4: Some respirators are designed and tested to meet international standards. These respirators are labeled to tell you what standard they meet. [Respirators approved by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health \(NIOSH\)](#) against a specific US standard that includes a quality requirement. International standards do not often have quality requirements.

The most widely available respirators that meet an international standard are KN95s.

Other examples include 1st, DL2, DL3, DS2, DS3, FFP2, FFP3, KN100, KP95, KP100, P2, P3, PFF2, PFF3, R95, and Special.

Counterfeit (fake) KN95 respirators

- **BE AWARE: About 60% KN95 respirators in the United States are [counterfeit \(fake\)](#) and DO NOT meet NIOSH requirements.**
- A [webpage](#) and a [webinar](#) are available about factors to consider when purchasing an international respirator.
- **Q5: What's the story on those newly approved Pfizer drug? Coming in months.**

A5: Pfizer’s Paxlovid is for the treatment of mild-to-moderate coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in adults and pediatric patients with a positive COVID-19 test result, and who are at high risk for progression to severe COVID-19, including hospitalization or death. Paxlovid is available by prescription only and should be initiated as soon as possible after diagnosis of COVID-19 and within five days of symptom onset. Paxlovid is being distributed through the Illinois Department of Public Health to a small number of healthcare providers and pharmacies. More information can be found here:

<https://dph.illinois.gov/covid19/covid-19-outpatient-therapy-locator.html>

- **Q6: f a new mother is breastfeeding and Covid+, does she need to isolate from her newborn who is negative?**

A6: Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 should stay home for 5 days and isolate from others in your home as much as possible. You should wear a well-fitted mask for 10 full days any time you are around others inside your home or in public. More information on recommendations for isolation and quarantine can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html>