

## Similarities: COVID-19 and the Flu

### Symptoms

- Both cause fever, cough, body aches, fatigue; sometimes vomiting and diarrhea.
- Can be mild or severe, even fatal in rare cases.
- Can result in pneumonia.

### Transmission

- Both can be spread from person to person through droplets in the air from an infected person coughing, sneezing or talking.
- A possible difference: COVID-19 might be spread through the airborne route (see details below under Differences).
- Flu can be spread by an infected person for several days before their symptoms appear, and COVID-19 is believed to be spread in the same manner, but we don't yet know for sure.

### Treatment

- Neither virus is treatable with antibiotics, which only work on bacterial infections.
- Both may be treated by addressing symptoms, such as reducing fever. Severe cases may require hospitalization and support such as mechanical ventilation.

### Prevention

Both may be prevented by frequent, thorough hand washing, coughing into the crook of your elbow, staying home when sick and limiting contact with people who are infected.

## Differences: COVID-19 and the Flu

### Cause

**COVID-19:** Caused by one virus, the novel 2019 coronavirus, now called severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2, or SARS-CoV-2.

**Flu:** Caused by any of several different types and strains of influenza viruses.

### Transmission

While both the flu and COVID-19 may be transmitted in similar ways (see the Similarities section above), there is also a possible difference: COVID-19 might be spread through the airborne route, meaning that

tiny droplets remaining in the air could cause disease in others even after the ill person is no longer near.

## **Antiviral Medications**

- **COVID-19:** Antiviral medications are currently being tested to see if they can address symptoms.
- **Flu:** Antiviral medications can address symptoms and sometimes shorten the duration of the illness.

## **Vaccine**

- **COVID-19:** No vaccine is available at this time, though it is in progress.
- **Flu:** A vaccine is available and effective to prevent some of the most dangerous types or to reduce the severity of the flu.

## **Infections**

- **COVID-19:** Approximately 81,322 cases worldwide; 59 cases in the U.S. as of Feb. 26, 2020.
- **Flu:** Estimated 1 billion cases worldwide; 9.3 million to 45 million cases in the U.S. per year.

## **Deaths**

- **COVID-19:** Approximately 2,770 deaths reported worldwide; 0 deaths in the U.S., as of Feb. 26, 2020. Death Rate approximately 2 per thousand
- **Flu:** 291,000 to 646,000 deaths worldwide; 12,000 to 61,000 deaths in the U.S. per year. Death Rate approximately 1 per thousand

[https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/coronavirus-disease-2019-vs-the-flu?fbclid=IwAR05ODQaR8osic6vLCHG0KxgIVBI1CmkF\\_Zoy5T3TCFUHIX6diLUHO4Kzto](https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/coronavirus-disease-2019-vs-the-flu?fbclid=IwAR05ODQaR8osic6vLCHG0KxgIVBI1CmkF_Zoy5T3TCFUHIX6diLUHO4Kzto)