MUST-KNOW COVID-19 VOCABULARY

The amount of COVID-19 information available is overwhelming, not to mention changing every day. And when it comes to technical terms associated with the outbreak, they are plentiful. While everyone can't be expected to know every word and phrase associated with COVID-19, taking time to learn what you can is essential to staying informed and safe. To help, we've compiled a glossary that includes some of the more commonly used COVID-19 terms.

Term	Definition	How does it relate to COVID-19?
Apex	The peak	Refers to the highest number of cases in a state or country, after which the rate of infection begins to slow. In our area, we have not yet reached apex.
Asymptomatic	Showing no evidence of disease/illness	Just because a person is asymptomatic doesn't mean they aren't infected with COVID-19.
Community Spread	Spread of a disease where the infection source is unknown	At this point there is community spread in OR, meaning there are people who have the infection without any typical risks of contracting the virus, such as travel or exposure to a known infected person.
Coronavirus	A family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases	The novel (new) coronavirus that emerged in late 2019 has been named SARS-CoV-2 and causes the disease known as COVID-19.
COVID-19	Name of the disease caused by the novel coronavirus	COVID-19 is short for **CO**rona**VI**rus **D**isease-20**19.**
Flatten the curve	The curve represents the number of cases over time. Flattening that curve means preventing a surge of new cases in a very short period.	By flattening the curve of the COVID-19 spread, we reduce the number of patients who are ill from the disease at any one time so that we do not overwhelm the health care system.
Immunocompromised	Having an impaired or compromised immune response	People may be immunocompromised due to an underlying condition or due to a medication they are taking for a condition. Being immunocompromised may put a person at higher risk for COVID-19.
Pandemic	A disease prevalent throughout an entire country,	The World Health Organization (WHO) uses pandemic to refer to

	continent, or the whole world. A pandemic is an epidemic that has spread over a large area.	new diseases people do not have immunity for that have spread worldwide. The WHO has declared the coronavirus outbreak a pandemic.
Self-quarantine	Choosing or volunteering to isolate out of caution	Individuals who have been exposed to the new coronavirus and who are at risk for contracting COVID-19 might practice self-quarantine. Health experts recommend that self-quarantine lasts 14 days.
Social/Physical Distancing	Measures that reduce contact between large groups of people	Given the community spread of disease, this means minimizing contact with any people that you don't need to be in contact with. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) specifically recommends maintaining six feet between people.
Quarantine	Strict isolation imposed to prevent the spread of disease	To help stop the spread, people have been placed into quarantine when they are not currently sick but have been or may have been exposed to the virus.
Virus	An infectious agent that replicates only within the cells of living hosts	COVID-19 is a virus that spreads through droplets expelled after coughing, sneezing, exhaling, or talking from the mouth and/or nose of a person who has the virus.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Some terms are hard to distinguish from others and because of that, people are using them interchangeably and incorrectly! Below, we help explain and further define some very important differences.

Epidemic versus Pandemic
While an epidemic, a temporary prevalence or rapid spread of a disease, occurs on a community or regional level, a pandemic is an epidemic that has spread over a large area and has become prevalent throughout an entire country, continent, or the whole world.

Virus versus Bacteria
Although bacterial and viral infections may cause similar symptoms, they are dissimilar in many other ways, including the way they respond to medications. Most bacteria are harmless, and some actually help by digesting food, destroying disease-causing microbes, fighting cancer cells, and providing essential nutrients. Most viruses on the other hand, do cause disease with certain viruses

attacking cells in the liver, respiratory system, or blood. Unfortunately, antibiotics are not effective against viruses.

Respirator versus Ventilator
A respirator is a face mask that seals around the mouth and filters out particles from the air before they are breathed in. An N95 respirator filters out 95 percent of tiny test particles. A ventilator is a machine that moves air in and out of the lungs in the case that a patient is having trouble breathing on their own.

Quarantine versus Isolation
Isolation and quarantine are practices used to prevent exposure to people who have or may have a contagious disease. However, while isolation separates sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick, quarantine separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick.

Flu versus COVID-19
While COVID-19 shares many similarities with the flu, there are several differences between the two. While flu symptoms are typically rapidly onset and can take 1-4 days to develop, COVID-19 symptoms can take up to 14 days to appear and may not appear at all. The two illnesses share symptoms such as fever, cough, and fatigue. However, shortness of breath is a major symptom to look out for with COVID-19.