What is COVID-19?
Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory (breathing) illness caused by a novel (new) coronavirus that was first identified during an outbreak in China.

What are the symptoms?
The symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to the flu. They include fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

I have symptoms, should I go to the doctor?
If you are experiencing mild cold or flu-like symptoms, we advise you to stay home. Most people can treat their symptoms at home with over-the-counter medicines. We recommend you follow the step-by-step guidance on the CDC website here: cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/steps-when-sick.html

You can also get guidance from a doctor without leaving home, on our virtual service, Mount Sinai NOW™, mountsinai.org/msnow as a first step. You can get guidance from a doctor on your smartphone or personal computer, using a video call, online visit, or Text-to-Chat.

Should I wear a mask?
Because some people infected with COVID-19 may not have any symptoms, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) now recommends that you wear a face covering (such as a homemade face mask) when in public. Higher grade medical masks and respirators should be reserved for health care workers.

How can I protect myself?
- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, or use hand sanitizer (at least 60 percent alcohol).
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.
- Don’t touch your eyes, nose, or mouth, especially with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Stay home
Everyone should stay home until Governor Cuomo announces that “New York State on Pause” is over. Only leave your house for essential needs, like groceries and medicine. If you are sick, leave home only to seek medical care.

Is it safe to come to Mount Sinai?
Our first priority is always the safety of our patients. As the number of cases of COVID-19 has grown substantially in the greater New York area, routine visits with our providers are being rescheduled or offered as video visits.

If you do not have COVID-19, but want to schedule a routine doctor's appointment, you can set up a video visit easily through MyChart.

If you need more information, please call your provider.
If you need to come in for ongoing care that must be delivered in person, such as chemotherapy or dialysis, please know that we have taken many steps to keep all our patients safe. Please contact your provider for specific information.

If you want to visit an inpatient at one of our hospitals, please review our visitor policy at https://www.mountsinai.org/about/covid19/patient-updates for important changes that apply during this emergency.

I want to know more; what are good sources of information?
The best resource for information on the virus is on the CDC website at www.cdc.gov. The CDC provides useful information including frequently asked questions and travel guidance. More information is also available at mountsinai.org/about/covid19.