



# How to Be Clear During COVID-19: Part 2

As we learn more about the coronavirus, new words continue to enter our vocabulary. All communicators need to be clear when writing about these terms. Use plain language: Avoid complex terms and long sentences so that people can make important health decisions.

Our first [COVID-19 plain language cheat sheet](#) covers 20+ terms. Now it's time for Part 2.

PHRASES RELATED TO THE "NEW NORMAL"		
TERM	EXPLANATION	EXAMPLE
 Contact tracing	The process of identifying and informing people who have come into contact with a person who has COVID-19	Contact tracers can help stop the spread of the coronavirus. They let people know if they've been around someone with COVID-19.
 Face covering	Secured material (including cloth masks, bandanas or scarves) that covers a person's nose and mouth	The CDC recommends people wear face coverings in places where it's difficult to keep 6' of distance between others (about the length of a bicycle). You can use a cloth mask, bandana or scarf.
 Quarantine bubble or "Quaranteam"	A group of individuals or families who have been safely quarantining and decide to exclusively spend time with one another	Quarantine bubbles are groups of people who socialize only with each other to create support and connection.
MEDICAL TERMS		
TERM	EXPLANATION	EXAMPLE
 Antiviral medication or drug	A type of medicine that may stop a virus from multiplying in the body	Doctors are studying how well antiviral drugs work on very ill patients. These drugs may help stop the virus from growing in the body and making patients sicker.
 Clinical trial	A carefully conducted research program where new drugs or treatments are tested for safety and effectiveness	Researchers are leading clinical trials to study how different medications treat COVID-19. People can participate in these studies, where they receive the new treatment under the care of doctors.
 Emergency use	The ability of doctors to use not-yet-approved drugs in serious cases where no standard treatment is available	The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has given an emergency use label to certain drugs for COVID-19. These drugs have not received FDA approval. But this label allows doctors to use them to treat very sick patients, since there is no regular treatment.

 <p>Excess deaths</p>	<p>The number of deaths beyond what would typically be expected for that time period</p>	<p>Scientists need to know how many people died during a pandemic because of the virus or from other reasons. They use the term excess deaths to describe these numbers. Excess deaths are the number of people who died during a specific time period, compared with the number who died during that same period in past years.</p>
 <p>Herd immunity</p>	<p>When a large part of the population is protected from a specific disease</p>	<p>Scientists believe that herd immunity may happen when 60 to 80% of people have recovered from the coronavirus or when there is a vaccine. At that point, enough people will be protected from the virus. Then COVID-19 shouldn't spread as quickly.</p>

### VOCABULARY ABOUT TESTING

TERM	EXPLANATION	EXAMPLE
 <p>Antibodies</p>	<p>Proteins the body produces to fight off infection after being exposed to a virus</p>	<p>Scientists are studying coronavirus antibodies, chemicals the body produces after COVID-19. Antibodies may protect people from catching the virus again.</p>
 <p>Antibody test</p>	<p>A blood test that determines if a person has been exposed to COVID-19</p>	<p>Antibody tests are helping researchers understand the coronavirus, how it spreads and if you can get it again. These blood tests show if a person had COVID-19.</p>
 <p>COVID-19 viral test, often just called a "COVID-19 test"</p>	<p>A test that uses samples from a person's respiratory system, such as mucus or saliva, to check if they are currently infected with COVID-19</p>	<p>To perform a COVID-19 viral test, a healthcare worker uses a cotton swab to collect mucus or saliva. If the test result is positive, it means you currently have the coronavirus.</p>
 <p>Point-of-care test</p>	<p>A COVID-19 test, in which a person can get the results at the testing site, often in less than an hour</p>	<p>With rapid point-of-care tests, a person gets COVID-19 results within the hour.</p>
 <p>Self-swab test</p>	<p>A COVID-19 test where a person inserts a cotton swab into their nose (instead of a healthcare worker doing it)</p>	<p>Some pharmacies may begin to offer self-swab COVID-19 tests. You can perform your own test at the drugstore, by inserting a cotton swab into your nose.</p>

For more tips on creating content about the coronavirus, visit our [COVID-19 resources for healthcare communicators](#).

Or [reach out](#) if we can help.