

GI symptoms and potential fecal transmission in coronavirus patients

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This transmission electron microscope image shows SARS-CoV-2 -- also known as 2019-nCoV, the virus that causes COVID-19 -- isolated from a patient in the US. Virus particles are shown emerging from the surface of cells cultured in the

lab. The spikes on the outer edge of the virus particles give coronaviruses their name, crown-like. Credit: NIAID-RML

The world is bracing for the impact of the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, which has now spread to over 30 countries, infecting more than 80,000 people with over 2,600 deaths globally. A better understanding of how this virus is transmitted is key to preventing its spread.

In two new papers published online in *Gastroenterology*, investigators from China describe the impact of coronavirus on the [digestive tract](#).

Key findings:

- A significant portion of coronavirus patients have diarrhea, nausea, vomiting and/or abdominal discomfort before respiratory symptoms.
- Researchers recommend monitoring patients with initial GI distress, which will allow for earlier detection, diagnosis, isolation and intervention.
- Viral RNA is detectable in stool of patients with suspected coronavirus; it is now clear that the [virus](#) sheds into the stool.
- Viral gastrointestinal infection and potential fecal-oral transmission can last even after viral clearance in [respiratory tract](#).
- Prevention of fecal-oral transmission should be taken into consideration to control the spread the virus.

More information: COVID-19: Gastrointestinal manifestations and potential fecal-oral transmission, By Jinyang Gu, Shanghai Jiaotong University School of Medicine Xinhua Hospital, China, et al.

[www.gastrojournal.org/article/ ... \(20\)30281-X/fulltext](http://www.gastrojournal.org/article/... (20)30281-X/fulltext)

Evidence for gastrointestinal infection of SARS-CoV-2, By Fei Xiao, Sun Yat-sen University, Zhuhai, Guangdong Province, China, et al.

[www.gastrojournal.org/article/ ... \(20\)30282-1/fulltext](http://www.gastrojournal.org/article/... (20)30282-1/fulltext)

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