



## AS IT IS

# Does Weather Affect the Coronavirus Outside?

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Does weather affect the spread of the coronavirus outside a building, in the open air?

Not really, experts say.

The World Health Organization (WHO) says the virus can be spread in any kind of weather. There is also no reason to believe that cold weather can kill it.

The WHO says the virus is mainly spread between people. Rain and snow may help reduce the amount of the virus on chairs or other outside objects. But spread of the virus from surfaces is not believed to be a major **contributor** to the COVID-19 health crisis.

Scientists say the real concern about cold weather is that lower temperatures are more likely to keep people indoors. They also are more likely to be in more crowded spaces, where the virus can spread more easily.

Studies have shown that a large percentage of spread happens within homes when people are sharing common areas like **bathrooms**.

The WHO and others have also warned about the virus spreading in indoor areas with poor **ventilation**. They note the virus can be spread in the air, and infectious particles might remain in the air for several hours.

Some infections have been linked to **nightclub** visits, working out at physical exercise centers, and even performing with other people as part of a singing group.

The coronavirus does not spread as often outdoors because fresh air breaks up the virus particles. People also have an easier time keeping their distance from others in outdoor areas. But experts warn that coronavirus spread is still possible if people spend extended periods of time outdoors close to others without covering their nose and mouth.

Health officials say the best way to stop spread of the virus is to wear a face **mask** in public, stay at least 2 meters away from people not in your home and repeatedly wash your hands.

I'm Jonathan Evans.

*Jonathan Evans adapted this story for VOA Learning English from an Associated Press report. George Grow was the editor.*

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## Words in This Story

**bathroom** – *n.* a room with a sink and toilet and usually a bathtub or shower

**contributor** – *n.* someone or something that contributes something or that contributes to something

**mask** – *n.* a covering used to protect your face or cover your mouth

**nightclub** – *n.* a place that is open at night, has music, dancing, or a show, and usually serves alcoholic drinks and food