

# NIH Guidelines: Defining a COVID-19 Severity Spectrum

Stage	Characteristics
Asymptomatic or presymptomatic infection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Positive test for SARS-CoV-2 but no symptoms</li></ul>
Mild illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Varied symptoms (eg, fever, cough, sore throat, malaise, headache, muscle pain) but no shortness of breath, dyspnea, abnormal imaging</li></ul>
Moderate illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SpO<sub>2</sub> &gt; 93% and lower respiratory disease evidenced by clinical assessment or imaging</li></ul>
Severe illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SpO<sub>2</sub> ≤ 93%, PaO<sub>2</sub>/FiO<sub>2</sub> &lt; 300, respiratory rate &gt; 30 breaths/min, or lung infiltrates &gt; 50%</li></ul>
Critical illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Respiratory failure, septic shock, and/or multiorgan dysfunction</li></ul>