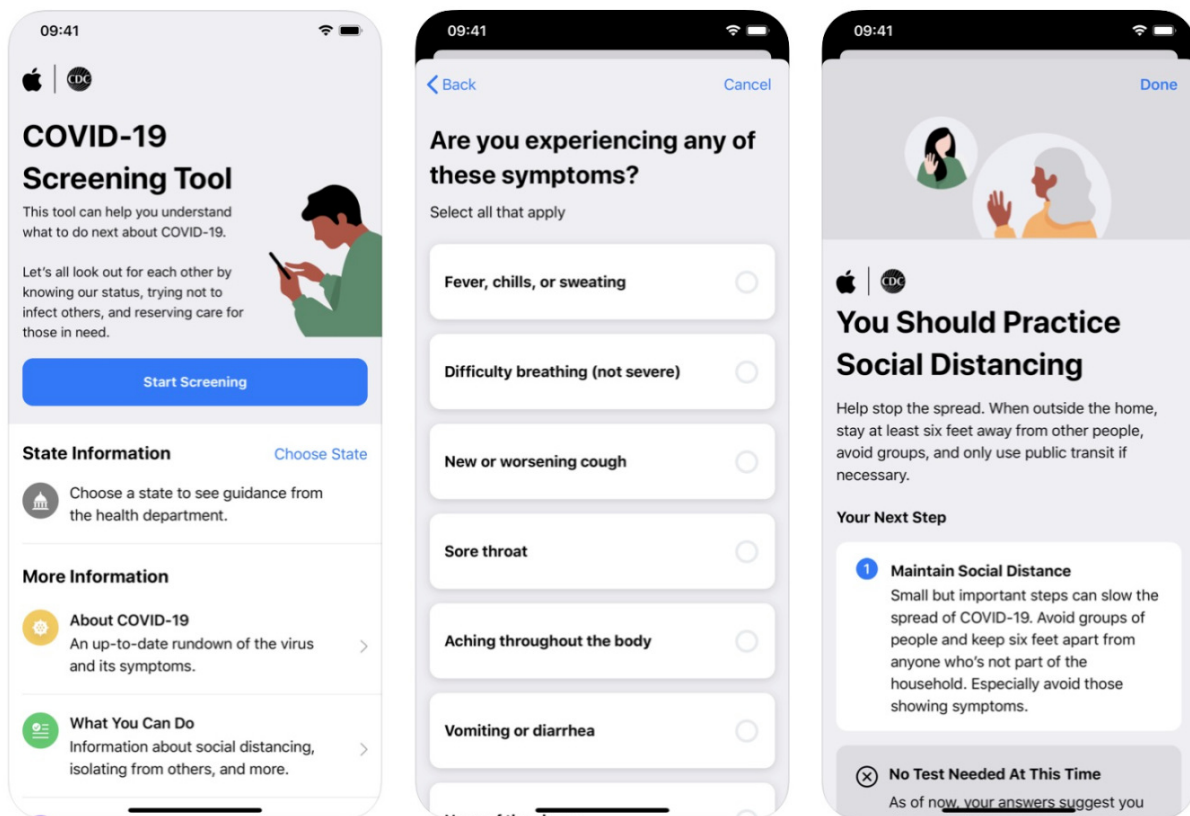


Apple adds anonymous symptom and health info sharing to its COVID-19 app and website

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Apple has updated its own COVID-19 iOS app and website with new features to allow users to anonymously share info, including their age, number of existing health conditions, symptoms, potential exposure risks and the state in which they're located. This info, which is not

associated with any of their personal identifying data in any way, according to the company, will be used in an aggregated way to help inform the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and improve the organization's COVID-19 screening protocol.

The app will also use the aggregated data to assist public health agencies and the CDC in their efforts to help the public with the best available information about potential risk factors around COVID-19, and around what constitutes exposure and exposure risk.

Apple launched its coronavirus screening app and website back in March, providing not only screening tools to help provide users with guidance on whether or not they should seek testing, but also tips on preventative measures, including hand-washing and best practices for sanitization.

This app and website should not be confused with [Apple and Google's collaborative COVID-19 Exposure Notification API](#), which is a developer tool that the two made available to public health agencies and their partners in order to build apps that can provide anonymized, privacy-friendly notifications to users who may have come in contact with someone who has COVID-19 and might've been exposed to infection. Apple's app is an informational resource and screening tool only, though with this most recent update it also

becomes a resource for public health agencies and the CDC to better understand the spread of COVID-19 through aggregated, anonymized data collection. Despite what it may feel like, COVID-19 still hasn't been around all that long, and it's still not super well understood by scientists and researchers. Gathering and studying more data and information about affected populations is a key way that the health community can learn more about the novel coronavirus and how best to mitigate the threat it poses.