



Caring for Our Community

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT 2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (2019-nCoV)

Following guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), this document has been updated as of **Feb. 5, 2020**.

2019 Novel Coronavirus Basics

Q: What is 2019 Novel Coronavirus?

A: 2019 Novel Coronavirus, or 2019-nCoV, is a virus strain, first identified in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, that has only spread in people since December 2019.

Health experts are closely monitoring the situation because little is known about this new virus, and it has the potential to cause severe illness and pneumonia in some people.

Q: How does 2019 Novel Coronavirus spread and what are the symptoms?

A: The 2019 Novel Coronavirus is primarily spread through respiratory droplets, produced when a person coughs or sneezes. To become infected, people generally must be within six feet of someone who is contagious and come into contact with these droplets. Symptoms of 2019 Novel Coronavirus appear within two to 14 days after exposure and include fever, cough, runny nose and difficulty breathing. Reported cases have ranged from mild illness (similar to a common cold) to severe pneumonia that requires hospitalization.

Q: Who is at risk of becoming infected with 2019 Novel Coronavirus?

A: Those who have been exposed to people infected with 2019 Novel Coronavirus and those ill with respiratory symptoms who have traveled from China

in the last 14 days. Like all people suffering illness, patients who may be affected by this virus should be treated with compassion. We should all work to prevent actions that could perpetuate a stigma attached to 2019 Novel Coronavirus or appear to be targeted at people from other countries living in your communities.

Q: How high is my risk of catching the 2019 Novel Coronavirus?

A: While this is a serious health situation, the CDC still considers the risk to the general public in the United States to be low. While limited person-to-person spread among close contacts has been detected, this virus is not currently spreading in the community in the United States. It is far more likely that Americans will contract flu than 2019 Novel Coronavirus. The CDC estimates that there have been between 10,000 and 25,000 U.S. deaths from flu this season. There have been no confirmed U.S. deaths due to 2019 Novel Coronavirus. A flu shot is recommended for Americans 6 months old and older who have not yet received one this season; however, the flu vaccine does not protect against 2019 Novel Coronavirus.

Q: What is the difference between the 2019 Novel Coronavirus and the flu?

A: The symptoms can be similar. CDC estimates that so far this season, there have been at least 19 million flu illnesses, 180,000 hospitalizations and

10,000 deaths in the U.S. As long as flu viruses are circulating, it is not too late to get vaccinated.

Q: How long does it take for symptoms of 2019 Novel Coronavirus to appear?

A: CDC believes at this time that symptoms of 2019 Novel Coronavirus may appear in as few as two days, or as long as 14 days after exposure. This is based on what has been seen previously as the incubation period of MERS viruses. There are isolated reports of individuals transmitting the infection to others before they develop symptoms. To be cautious, many governments are requiring an isolation period of 14 days for people returning from endemic areas.

Q: How is it treated?

A: There is currently no FDA-approved medication for the 2019 Novel Coronavirus. People infected with this virus should receive supportive care (rest, fluids, fever control) to help relieve symptoms, and for severe cases, treatment should include care to support vital organ functions.

Prevention

Q: Is there a vaccine?

A: Currently, there is no vaccine available.

Q: How can I best protect myself?

A: Practice the following:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

- Clean and disinfect frequently-touched objects and surfaces.
- It's currently flu and respiratory disease season and CDC recommends getting vaccinated, taking everyday preventive actions to stop the spread of germs, and taking flu antivirals if prescribed.

Q: Should I wear a face mask? Will that help protect me?

A: There is no recommendation from the CDC right now to wear a face mask. Masks certainly do no harm. They do help to stop the spread of infection, so they can help if someone who is actively sick wears them. However, when it comes to this specific 2019 Novel Coronavirus, if you are not sick, around someone who is sick and do not have symptoms, maintaining proper infection control such as frequent hand washing and cough etiquette is the best form of protection.

Cleveland Clinic's Response and Preparedness

Q: How is Cleveland Clinic preparing for 2019 Novel Coronavirus?

A: We are closely monitoring this evolving situation and our clinicians are meeting regularly to continue to prepare. We are following CDC guidance. As part of this, we have added a screening question to identify patients who have recently traveled from China. Like other health systems, we are preparing should the need arise, following CDC and the World Health Organization's recommendations and protocols and working closely with our public health partners.

Q: Have you treated any patients with 2019 Novel Coronavirus?

A: As of Feb. 5, 2020, Cleveland Clinic has not treated any patients with 2019 Novel Coronavirus. This applies to all Cleveland Clinic locations across the enterprise.

Q: Is Cleveland Clinic screening patients for 2019 Novel Coronavirus?

A: We are following CDC recommendations on screening for travel from China. As part of the intake process, travel questions have been added to outpatient visits. Travel screenings are part of the standard process for inpatients.

Travel

Q: What should I do if I have symptoms and have recently traveled?

A: If you traveled from China in the last 14 days and feel sick with fever, cough or have difficulty breathing, you should:

- Seek medical care right away. Before you go to a doctor’s office or emergency room, call ahead and tell them about your recent travel and your symptoms.
- Avoid contact with others.
- Avoid traveling.

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

Q: Should I travel to China?

A: CDC recommends avoiding nonessential travel to China. If you must travel:

- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid animals (alive or dead), animal markets and products that come from animals (such as uncooked meat).
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Older adults and travelers with underlying health issues may be at risk for more severe disease.

Additional State and National Resources:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Ohio Department of Health - <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/novel-coronavirus/2019-ncov>

Florida Health - <http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/2019-nCoV/index.html>

Southern Nevada Health District - <https://www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/coronavirus/>

Additional Global Resources:

World Health Organization - <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

Government of Canada - <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus.html>

Ontario – Ministry of Health - <https://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov>

Public Health England - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/wuhan-novel-coronavirus>



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