**2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)**

**Talking Points**

**Situation Summary: Friday 01/24/2020, 1700**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is closely monitoring an outbreak of respiratory illness caused by a novel (new) coronavirus first identified in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. Chinese authorities identified the new coronavirus, which has resulted in hundreds of confirmed cases in China, including cases outside Wuhan, with additional cases being identified in a growing number of countries internationally.

As of January 24, three confirmed travel-associated cases have been confirmed in the US. At this time, there are an additional 63 persons under investigation from 22 states that are being tested by CDC.

# **About 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)**

**There is an ongoing investigation to determine more about this outbreak. This is a rapidly evolving situation and information will be updated as it becomes available.**

The latest situation summary updates are available on CDC’s web page [2019 Novel Coronavirus, Wuhan, China](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html).2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) is a virus (more specifically, a [coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/index.html)) identified as the cause of an outbreak of respiratory illness first detected in Wuhan, China. Early on, many of the patients in the outbreak in Wuhan, China reportedly had some link to a large seafood and animal market, suggesting animal-to-person spread. However, a growing number of patients reportedly have not had exposure to animal markets, indicating person-to-person spread is occurring.

When person-to-person spread occurred with SARS-CoV and MERS-CoV, it was thought to have happened via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes, similar to how influenza and other respiratory pathogens spread. Spread of SARS-CoV and MERS-CoV between people has generally occurred between close contacts.

It’s important to note that how easily a virus spreads person-to-person can vary. Some viruses are highly contagious (like measles), while other viruses are less so. It’s not clear yet how easily 2019-nCoV spreads from person-to-person. It’s important to know this in order to better understand the risk associated with this virus.

Of note, there are actually 4 coronaviruses that are currently circulating in the United States with varying degrees of infectivity and virulence. Therefore, it is especially important to take a travel history when evaluating any patient with a fever and infectious symptoms.

# **Symptoms**

Patients with confirmed 2019-nCoV infection have reportedly had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of:

* fever
* cough
* shortness of breath

CDC believes at this time that symptoms of 2019-nCoV may appear in as few as 2 days or as long as 14 after exposure.

**2019-nCoV Prevention**

There is currently no vaccine to prevent 2019-nCoV infection. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus. Right now, 2019-nCoV has not been found to be spreading in the United States, so there are no additional precautions recommended for the general public to take. However, as a reminder, CDC always recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:

* 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.

These are every-day habits that can help prevent the spread of several viruses. CDC does have [specific guidance for travelers](https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/alert/novel-coronavirus-china).

**2019-nCoV Treatment**

There is no specific antiviral treatment recommended for 2019-nCoV infection. People infected with 2019-nCoV should receive supportive care to help relieve symptoms. For severe cases, treatment should include care to support vital organ functions.

People who think they may have been exposed to 2019-nCoV should contact your healthcare provider immediately.

See [Interim Guidance for Healthcare Professionals](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/clinical-criteria.html) for information on patients under investigation.

**Guidance for Travelers**

#### **Key Points**

* **CDC recommends that travelers avoid all nonessential travel to Wuhan, China.**
* There is an ongoing [outbreak of respiratory illness](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/novel-coronavirus-2019.html) caused by a novel (new) coronavirus that can be spread from person to person.
* Chinese officials have closed transport within and out of several cities within the Hubei Province in China, including buses, subways, trains, and the international airport.
* Preliminary information suggests that older adults and people with underlying health conditions may be at increased risk for severe disease from this virus.
* The situation is evolving. This notice will be updated as more information becomes available.

#### **What can travelers do to protect themselves and others?**

**CDC recommends avoiding nonessential travel to Wuhan.** If you must travel:

* Avoid contact with sick people.
* 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 and should discuss travel to Wuhan with their healthcare provider.

If you traveled to Wuhan in the last 14 days and feel sick with fever, cough, or 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.
* Not travel while sick.
* 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.

**While CDC considers this a serious public health concern, based on current information, the immediate health risk from 2019-nCoV to the general American public is considered low at this time.** Nevertheless, CDC and the Louisiana Department of Health are taking proactive preparedness precautions.