# Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

## 1. What is a coronavirus?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. Many of them infect animals, but some coronaviruses from animals can evolve (change) into a new human coronavirus that can spread from person-to-person. This is what happened with the current novel coronavirus known as 2019-nCoV. Diseases from coronaviruses in people typically cause mild to moderate illness, like the common cold. Some, like the SARS or MERS viruses, cause serious infections like pneumonia.

## 2. How are coronaviruses spread?

Like other respiratory illnesses, such as influenza, human coronaviruses most commonly spread to others from an infected person who has symptoms through:

- Droplets produced through coughing and sneezing
- Close personal contact, such as caring for an infected person
- Touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes before washing your hands

**Novel Coronavirus** is new, and we are learning more each day about how easily it spreads and how long it takes for people to become sick. As information becomes available, we will keep you informed.

Do not assume that someone of Asian descent is likely to have novel coronavirus.

## 3. What are the symptoms of Novel Coronavirus?

Reported illnesses have ranged from people with mild symptoms to people becoming severely ill, requiring admission to the hospital, and dying.

Symptoms include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing
- Severe illness

If you have traveled from mainland China and develop any of these symptoms within 14 days of your return, 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 symptoms <u>and</u> your recent travel.

### Key Points

- Novel Coronavirus is a new virus that hasn't been seen in humans before.
- Coronaviruses can spread through close personal contact or by touching an object or surface with the virus on it.
- Steps to prevent other respiratory infections will help to prevent Novel Coronavirus.
- Public Health is working hard to prevent the spread of novel coronavirus in LA County.

### For more information:

**Los Angeles County Department of Public Health**

http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**
http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/novel-coronavirus-2019.html

**World Health Organization**
https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus

## 4. How is novel coronavirus treated?

There is no specific treatment for illness caused by the novel coronavirus. However, many of the symptoms can be treated. Treatment is based on the patient's condition.

There is currently no vaccine to prevent novel coronavirus. Be aware of scam products for sale that make false claims to prevent or treat this new infection.

## 5. How can I protect myself when I travel?

At this time, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that people avoid all nonessential travel to mainland China. Check their Travelers' Health Destinations webpage (https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list) for up-to-date recommendations before you travel. If you travel to other places, taking steps to prevent the spread of respiratory infections, like the flu, will also help to prevent coronaviruses. Talk with your doctor before travel to make sure you have received the recommended vaccines and medications specific to your destination to protect your health.

## 6. What actions are being taken by the Federal Government regarding travelers from mainland China?

Because of the explosion in the number of new cases in mainland China the past few days, the White House recently issued the following set of new directives that became effective on February 3. These orders apply only to travelers arriving in the United States after February 2.

- Restricting all foreign nationals who have traveled or been in mainland China in the past 14 days from entering the US. This order can be renewed by the President every 14 days.

- Requiring all US citizens and their close family members returning from mainland China to enter through one of eleven airports in the US (including LAX), where they will be screened by US Customs and Border Protection agents.

    o If travelers are showing signs of respiratory illness, they will be sent for additional testing to a health care facility.

    o If travelers were in the Hubei Province at any time in the past 14 days, they will be quarantined at a secure location and monitored for illness for 14 days from their last exposure.

    o If travelers are returning from other places in mainland China and have been in close contact with a confirmed case of novel coronavirus, they may also be subject to quarantine for 14 days from last exposure.

    o If travelers are returning from all other parts of mainland China and they have not been in close contact with a confirmed case of novel coronavirus, they will be allowed to travel to their final destination where they will be monitored by their local public health department and asked to remain in their homes and avoid public places for 14 days from last exposure.

## 7. How will Public Health monitor travelers who are self-isolated?

With the new travel guidance, Public Health will regularly monitor potential cases to see if they develop any symptoms or fever. This is the same process we use with other communicable diseases, such as measles. Public Health will also monitor contacts for 14 days after the time of their last exposure, after which time they are considered to be free of the risk of developing novel coronavirus.

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## 8. What can I do to protect myself and others from respiratory infections like 2019-nCoV?

As with other respiratory illnesses, there are steps that everyone can take daily to reduce the risk of getting sick or infecting others with circulating viruses.

You should:

- **<u>Stay home when you are sick.</u>**
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Limit close contact, like kissing and sharing cups or utensils, with people who are sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. If you do not have a tissue, use your sleeve (not your hands).
- Facemasks are most effective when used appropriately by health care workers and people who are sick.
- Get a flu shot to prevent influenza if you have not done so this season.

## 9. What else can I do?

- Continue to encourage welcoming environments for ALL members of our community. Neither the California Department of Public Health nor Los Angeles County Public Health recommends that scheduled events be canceled due to novel coronavirus. There is no community spread of the novel coronavirus in the Unites States at this time, and the immediate risk to the general public is low.
- The White House Directives above do <u>not</u> apply for people who traveled in mainland China and arrived in the United States before February 3, and these travelers should not be excluded from activities unless they are ill.
- Always check with reliable sources for the up-to-date, accurate information about novel coronavirus.
    - Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH, County)
        - http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/
    - California Department of Public Health (CDPH, State)
        - https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/nCOV2019.aspx
    - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, National)
        - http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/novel-coronavirus-2019.html
    - World Health Organization (WHO, International)
        - https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus