

Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) Advice for Public

- The CDC is closely monitoring an outbreak caused by a new coronavirus in Wuhan, China that first emerged in December 2019.
- Current symptoms reported for patients with 2019-nCoV have included mild to severe respiratory illness with fever, cough, and difficulty breathing.
- As of January 31, there are seven confirmed cases in the U.S. and *no confirmed cases in New Jersey.*
- While the CDC considers this to be a serious public health concern, based on current information, *the immediate health risk from the 2019-nCoV to the general public in the U.S. is considered low at this time.*
- NJDOH is monitoring the situation closely and is proactively preparing guidance documents for public health and health care professionals to be able to effectively respond to any cases that may be identified in the state.
- Everyone can do their part to help respond to this emerging public health threat. Following are recommendations to reduce exposure and transmission:
 1. Frequently clean hands by using alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.
 2. Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or a sleeve/ flexed elbow, not your hands.
 3. Stay home if you are sick. Seek medical attention. Avoid close contact with anyone who has fever and cough.
 4. Review and follow CDC travel advisories when planning travel. If you become ill after returning home to the United States, call your healthcare provider before going to a doctor's office or emergency department. They may want to place a mask on you before you enter the building to protect other people.

Frequently Asked Questions:

If someone has returned from China, but has no symptoms, can they be swabbed to be sure that they do not have the virus?

The CDC is currently not testing every individual returning from travel in China and there should be no restrictions on individuals who are asymptomatic.

I am planning to travel soon. Should I wear a mask on the plane?

The CDC has not made any recommendations that travelers need to wear masks in an effort to prevent exposure to the 2019 novel coronavirus. CDC recommends avoid non-essential travel to Wuhan, China; transportation is closed in and out of Wuhan (Level 3 Travel Health Notice). Level 2 for rest of China – avoid contact with sick people, avoid animals (dead/alive) & animal markets, and wash hands often.

If a coworker is diagnosed with the new coronavirus, can I get it from the office environment?

If a coworker was diagnosed with coronavirus, it is most likely the common seasonal coronavirus, not the novel virus identified in China which can only be identified at the CDC. Seasonal coronaviruses are spread like any other respiratory illness so precautions like hand hygiene, covering your mouth when coughing or sneezing, staying home when sick, and avoiding sick people are things individuals can do to prevent illness.

If there is a student/coworker/employee/health care worker who recently traveled to China, should they be excluded from work or school?

People who are not showing any symptoms of 2019-nCoV are not restricted from attending school or work.

What type of office cleaning should be done if there is a case of coronavirus?

As with any seasonal respiratory illness, routine cleaning is effective. Routine cleaning products are fine, bleach is not necessary.

Is it safe to eat Chinese food?

Here in New Jersey, eating Chinese food does not create any additional risk to being infected with this virus.

Is it safe to visit Chinatown in cities local to the New Jersey area?

Yes, it is safe to enjoy a visit to Chinatown in your favorite local city.

Is it safe to receive packages from China?

Coronaviruses do not live very long on surfaces, so it is considered to be very low risk to become infected by handling a package from China. There have been no evidence to support the spread of the virus through imported goods.

If I am in close contact with someone who has coronavirus should I wear a surgical mask protect myself from becoming infected?

There is little need for the general public to wear face masks in the U.S. currently as the threat level is low. But for people who are in close contact with an infected person, a mask may be helpful if used properly. They are not 100% effective as the virus can enter through the sides of the mask or enter the body through the eyes. Health care workers should follow all infection control guidance when caring for patients who are suspected or confirmed cases of 2019-nCoV.

Additional Information:

- Information on the virus from the state: <https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/ncov.shtml>
- The latest situation summary updates from CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Travel Advisory](#) from the U.S. Department of State
- [Travel Health Alert Notices](#) (English and Chinese)
- [CDC Travel Advisory](#) to avoid all nonessential travel to China