

Understanding 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) is a virus that causes a respiratory illness. There are many types of coronavirus. Coronaviruses are a very common cause of bronchitis. They may sometimes cause lung infection (pneumonia). Symptoms can range from mild to severe respiratory illness. These viruses are also found in some animals. 2019-nCoV was first found in people in Wuhan, China, in late 2019. In 2020, several cases of 2019-nCoV have been confirmed in the U.S.

Public health officials are working to find the source. How the virus spreads is not yet fully known. It may be spread through droplets of fluid that a person coughs or sneezes into the air. It may be spread if you touch a surface with virus on it, such as a handle or object, and then touch your mouth.

What are the symptoms of 2019-nCoV?

Some people have no symptoms or mild symptoms. Symptoms may appear 2 to 14 days after contact with the virus. Symptoms can include:

- Fever
- Coughing
- Trouble breathing

What are possible complications from 2019-nCoV?

In many cases, this virus can cause infection (pneumonia) in both lungs. In some cases, this can cause death.

How is 2019-nCoV diagnosed?

Your healthcare provider will ask about your symptoms. He or she will also ask about your recent travel and contact with sick people. Testing for the virus is only done through the CDC. If your healthcare provider thinks you may have 2019-nCoV, he or she will work with your local health department and the CDC on testing. Follow all instructions from your healthcare provider. 2019-nCoV is diagnosed by:

- Nasal and throat swab. A cotton-tipped swab is wiped inside your nose or throat. This is done to check for viruses in your nasal mucus.
- Sputum culture. A small sample of mucus coughed from your lungs (sputum) is collected if you have a cough. It is checked for the virus.

How is 2019-nCoV treated?

There is currently no medicine to treat the virus. Treatment is done to help your body while it fights the virus. This is known as supportive care. Supportive care may include:

- Pain medicine. These include acetaminophen and ibuprofen. They are used to help ease pain and reduce fever.
- Bed rest. This helps your body fight the illness.

For severe illness, you may need to stay in the hospital. Care during severe illness may include:

- IV (intravenous) fluids. These are given through a vein to help keep your body hydrated.
- Oxygen. Supplemental oxygen or ventilation with a breathing machine (ventilator) may be given. This is done to keep enough oxygen in your body.

Are you at risk for 2019-nCoV?

If you've been to a place where people have been sick with this virus, you are at risk for infection. You are at risk if you:

- Recently traveled to China
- Had contact with a sick person who recently traveled to this area
- Had contact with a person who was diagnosed with 2019-nCoV

How can 2019-nCoV be prevented?

There is no vaccine yet. The best prevention is to not have contact with the virus. The CDC advises that people should not travel to the People's Republic of China right now for any reason that is not urgent.

If you are in an area with 2019-nCoV:

- Wash your hands often. Or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer often.
- Only touch your eyes, nose, or mouth with clean hands.
- Don't have contact with people who are sick.
- Follow local instructions about being in public. For example, you may be told to not use public transport for a period of time.
- Stay away from markets that have live or dead animals.
- Wash your hands after touching any animals. Don't touch animals that may be sick.
- Don't share eating or drinking tools with sick people.
- Don't kiss someone who is sick.
- Clean surfaces often with disinfectant.

If you were in an area with 2019-nCoV in the last 14 days:

- Call your healthcare provider. He or she can talk with local health staff to see what action may be needed.
- Follow all instructions from your provider.
- Take your temperature every morning and evening for at least 14 days. This is to check for fever. Keep a record of the readings.
- Keep watch for symptoms of the virus. Tell your provider right away if you have symptoms.

If you were in an area with 2019-nCoV and have a fever or other symptoms:

- Don't panic. Keep in mind that other illnesses can cause similar symptoms.
- Stay away from work, school, and public places. Limit physical contact with family members. Don't kiss anyone or share eating or drinking utensils. Clean surfaces you touch with disinfectant. This is to help prevent the virus from spreading.
- Call your healthcare provider. Explain that you have been exposed to 2019-nCoV and have symptoms. Do this before going to any hospital. Wait for instructions.
- Keep in mind that healthcare staff may wear protective equipment such as masks, gowns, gloves, and eye protection. You may be put in a separate room. This is to prevent the possible virus from spreading.
- Tell the healthcare staff about recent travel. This includes local travel on public transport. Staff may need to find other people you have been in contact with.
- Follow all instructions the healthcare staff give you.

If you have been diagnosed with 2019-nCoV

- Follow all instructions from your healthcare provider.
- Don't leave your home, except to get medical care.
- Call your healthcare provider's office before going. They can prepare and give you instructions. This will help prevent the virus from spreading.
- Don't go to work, school, or public areas.
- Don't use public transport or taxis.
- Stay away from other people in your home. Have them wear face masks around you.
- Don't share household items or food.
- Wear a face mask if you can. This includes at home or in a medical facility.
- Cover your face with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue away. Wash your hands.
- Wash your hands often.

Caregivers should:

- Follow all instructions from healthcare staff.
- Wear a face mask and protective clothing as advised.
- Wash hands often.
- Keep track of the sick person's symptoms.
- Clean surfaces, fabrics, and laundry thoroughly.
- Keep other people away from the sick person.

When to call your healthcare provider

Call your healthcare provider:

- If you've recently traveled and have symptoms
- If you have been diagnosed with 2019-nCoV and your symptoms are worse

To learn more

To find out more about 2019-nCoV, visit the CDC website at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html.