



The 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

Interim Frequently Asked Questions

This is a rapidly changing situation.

Please regularly check [the NYSDOH's 2019 Novel \(New\) Coronavirus webpage](#) and the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's \(CDC's\) 2019 Novel Coronavirus](#) and [the CDC's Frequently Asked Questions and Answers](#) webpages for updates.

What is 2019-nCoV?

The 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) is a virus that was found to be the cause of an outbreak of respiratory illness in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in December 2019. It is part of a family of viruses called coronaviruses. It is being called a “novel” (new) coronavirus because it is a new coronavirus that was not known before this outbreak.

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. There are several known coronaviruses that infect people and usually only cause mild illness, like the common cold. However, at least two previously identified coronaviruses have caused severe disease — Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) coronavirus and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) coronavirus.

What is the source of the 2019-nCoV?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. Some coronaviruses are found in people and others are found in animals, including camels, cats, and bats. Initially, in Wuhan, China, many of the patients in the outbreak had a connection to a large seafood and live animal market, suggesting the virus may have started from an animal source. This is still under investigation by public health officials and partners; at this time the origin has not been confirmed.

How many cases of 2019-nCoV have there been?

The number of cases being reported is changing rapidly. For up-to-date information please visit the [World Health Organization \(WHO\) Novel Coronavirus \(2019-nCoV\) situation reports webpage](#) for global information or the [CDC 2019 Novel Coronavirus \(2019nCoV\) in the U.S. webpage](#) for updates on confirmed 2019-nCoV cases and Patients Under Investigation (PUIs) in the United States.

Where have cases of 2019-nCoV been reported?

The locations of cases and the number of cases in these locations are also changing rapidly. For up-to-date information please visit the [World Health Organization \(WHO\) Novel Coronavirus \(2019-nCoV\) situation reports webpage](#) for global information or the [CDC 2019 Novel Coronavirus \(2019nCoV\) in the U.S. webpage](#) for updates on confirmed 2019-nCoV cases and Patients Under Investigation (PUIs) in the United States.

What are the symptoms of illness due to the 2019-nCoV?

Illness may include mild to severe respiratory illness including symptoms of fever, cough, and difficulty breathing. Read more about [2019-nCoV symptoms](#) at the CDC website. CDC believes at this time that symptoms of 2019-nCoV may appear in as few as 2 days or as long as 14 days after exposure to the virus; but the specific time line is still being determined.

How severe is the illness caused by the 2019-nCoV?

Health experts are still learning about the illness caused by this new virus. People infected with the virus have had symptoms ranging from those that are mild (like a common cold) to severe pneumonia that requires medical care in a hospital and may be fatal.

How does the 2019-nCoV virus spread?

This virus probably first came from an animal source but is now known to spread from person-to-person. At this time, it is unclear how easily this virus spreads between people. Currently, there is no ongoing community transmission of 2019-nCoV in the United States and the risk to the general public is low. Learn what is known about [how 2019-nCoV spreads](#) at the CDC website.

Can illness from the 2019-nCoV be treated?

There is no specific antiviral treatment recommended for 2019-nCoV infection as of yet, though several antiviral agents are being evaluated as possible treatment options. People infected with 2019-nCoV should receive supportive care to help relieve symptoms, including hospital admission for severe cases. People who think they may have been exposed to 2019-nCoV or may be sick from 2019-nCoV should contact their healthcare provider immediately.

Can illness from the 2019-nCoV be prevented?

There is currently no vaccine to prevent 2019-nCoV infection. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus. Currently, there is no ongoing community transmission in the United States and risk to the general public is low, so right now there are no additional precautions recommended for the general public. However, as a reminder, it is always recommended to take everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of all 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.

Should I use a face mask or N95 respirator in public to prevent illness from the 2019-nCoV?

No. CDC does not currently recommend the use of face masks or N95 respirators among the general public. 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.

In healthcare settings, it is recommended that healthcare staff use a fit-tested N95 respirator (or equivalent respiratory protection) while caring for a patient with known or suspected 2019-nCoV as one part of a larger set of recommendations on infection prevention and control measures. Please note that N95 respirators for healthcare workers must be specially fitted and tested to be fully effective. For healthcare professionals, see the [CDC's Interim Guidance for Healthcare Professionals webpage](#) and for further infection prevention and control guidance, see the [CDC's Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for 2019-nCoV in Healthcare Settings](#).

Am I at risk for getting 2019-nCoV in the United States?

This is a rapidly evolving situation and information is changing quickly. Currently, there is no ongoing community transmission of 2019-nCoV in the United States and the risk to the general public is low.

I'm feeling ill but I did not travel to China. Could I be infected with 2019-nCoV?

If you are concerned about your health, contact your healthcare provider. Currently, there is no ongoing community transmission of 2019-nCoV in the United States and the risk to the general public is low. However, if you have had close contact with someone who may have 2019-nCoV and who has recently traveled from China and you feel sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, you should:

- Contact your healthcare provider. Before you go to a doctor's office or emergency room, it is very important that you call ahead and tell them about your close contact exposure and their recent travel/symptoms and your own symptoms.
- Avoid contact with others as much as possible.
- Do not travel while sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

I recently traveled to China and now I feel sick. What should I do?

Individuals being monitored by their Local Health Department: Some individuals that have traveled from China within the last 14 days are being monitored daily for symptoms by their Local Health Department. If you are being monitored by your Local Health Department and start feeling sick, you should:

- Call 911 if you are experiencing a life-threatening medical emergency. It is important to mention your travel history to China when you speak with the operator.
- Contact your Local Health Department. Your Local Health Department can work with you on obtaining health care.
- Before** you go to a doctor's office or emergency room, it is very important that you call ahead and tell them about your recent travel to China and your symptoms.
- Avoid contact with others.
- Do not travel further while sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing. Throw the tissue in the trash.

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. (Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song twice from beginning to end.) Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

Individuals NOT being monitored by their Local Health Department:

If you are NOT currently being monitored by your Local Health Department and returned from China in the last 14 days and are now feeling sick, you should:

- Call 911 if you are experiencing a life-threatening medical emergency. It is important to mention your travel history to China when you speak with the operator.
- Contact your healthcare provider. **Before** you go to a doctor’s office or emergency room, it is very important that you call ahead and tell them about your close contact exposure and their recent travel/symptoms and your own symptoms.
- Avoid contact with others as much as possible.
- Do not travel while sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. (Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song twice from beginning to end.) Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

Should I be concerned about animals or animal products imported from China?

At this time, there is no evidence to suggest that animals or animal products imported from China pose a risk for spreading 2019-nCoV in the United States. The US Department of Agriculture regulates the importation of animals and animal products and CDC regulates the importation of animals and animal products capable of spreading human disease. Both agencies are closely monitoring the international situation.

Am I at risk for 2019-nCoV from a package or products shipped from China?

It is currently thought that products from China do not pose a risk to the public. There is no evidence to support transmission of 2019-nCoV from imported goods and there have not been any cases of 2019-nCoV in the U.S. associated with imported goods to date.

Should I travel to China?

The CDC currently recommends that travelers avoid all non-essential travel to China (CDC Warning - Level 3). The U.S. State Department has also advised U.S. citizens not to travel to China (DOS Warning - Level 4). Visit [CDC's Travelers' Health webpage](#) for the most up-to-date travel information.

Should I get tested for 2019-nCoV? Where is testing for 2019-nCoV performed?

If you are concerned about your health, contact your healthcare provider. Currently, there is no ongoing community transmission of 2019-nCoV in the U.S. and the risk to the general public is low.

Individuals being monitored by their Local Health Department: If you are being monitored by your Local Health Department due to recent travel to China (or close contact with a person who may have 2019-nCoV), contact your Local Health Department. Your Local Health Department will work with your healthcare provider to determine if you need testing for 2019-nCoV.

Individuals NOT being monitored by their Local Health Department: If you are NOT being monitored by your Local Health Department but had travel to China within the last 14 days and are now experiencing symptoms, contact your healthcare provider. Your healthcare provider will decide if you need testing in consultation with public health officials. The only way to test for 2019 novel coronavirus is through specialized testing at the CDC.

The 2019 novel coronavirus is a new virus and should not be confused with other coronaviruses that have been around for many years causing upper respiratory symptoms, like the common cold. If a routine test ordered by your healthcare provider is performed at a local hospital or laboratory, and is positive for coronavirus, that means that you have one of the common coronaviruses, like those that cause the common cold. If you are unsure which virus you were tested for or what the result means, be sure to ask your healthcare provider.

What is the NYSDOH doing to prevent the spread of 2019-nCoV in NYS?

In the U.S., more 2019-nCoV cases will likely be identified in the coming days, including the possibility of imported cases in New York State (NYS). To date, there have been no cases in NYS, and all cases in the U.S. have occurred among those who have recently traveled in China or have been close contacts of persons infected with the virus who had recently traveled in China. The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) is working closely and around the clock with health officials from the CDC, the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, NYS county health departments, and other partners to protect New Yorkers, monitor for disease, prevent spread, and be sure NYS is prepared and ready.

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