What is a novel coronavirus?

Novel (meaning "new") coronavirus is a virus strain that has only spread in people since December 2019. Health experts are concerned because little is known about this new virus and it has the potential to cause severe illness in some people.

How does novel coronavirus spread?

Health experts are still learning the details about how this new coronavirus spreads. Other coronaviruses spread from an infected person to others through:

- The air by coughing and sneezing
- Close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands
- Touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes
- In rare cases, contact with feces (poop)

How severe is novel coronavirus?

Health experts are still learning about the illness caused by the new virus. People infected have had illness that has ranged from mild (like a common cold) to severe pneumonia that requires medical care in a hospital. So far, deaths have been reported mainly in older adults who had other health conditions.

What are the symptoms?

People who have been diagnosed with novel coronavirus have symptoms that may appear in as few as two days or as long as 14 days after exposure to the virus. Symptoms may include fever, cough, and shortness of breath.
Who is at risk for novel coronavirus?

Currently, there is a widespread outbreak in Wuhan, China. At this time, the risk in the U.S. to the general public is low. At this time, there are a small number of cases in the U.S. To limit the risk of spread, health officials are working with healthcare providers to promptly identify and evaluate anyone they think may have the virus. Travelers to and from certain areas of the world may be at increased risk. See wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel for the latest travel guidance from the CDC.

How can I prevent from getting novel coronavirus?

If you are traveling overseas (to China, but also to other places) follow the CDC’s guidance at wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel.

Right now the novel coronavirus has not been spreading widely in the United States, so there are no additional precautions recommended for the general public. Steps you can take to prevent spread of flu and the common cold will also help prevent coronavirus:

- Wash hands often with soap and water. If not available, use hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid contact with people who are sick
- Stay home while you are sick and avoid contact with others
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing

Currently there are no vaccines available to prevent novel coronavirus infections.

How is novel coronavirus treated?

There is no specific treatment for coronavirus. Most people with mild coronavirus illness will recover on their own by drinking plenty of fluids, resting, and taking pain and fever medications. However, some people develop pneumonia and need medical care or treatment in a hospital.

For more information: https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/ncov.shtml

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1/2020
Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Community Mitigation Guidance for COVID-19 Response in the United States: Nonpharmaceutical Interventions for Community Preparedness and Outbreak Response

Nonpharmaceutical interventions (NPIs) are public health actions that can slow the spread of emerging respiratory diseases like COVID-19 for which vaccines and drug treatments are not yet available. They include personal protective measures implemented by individuals and community measures implemented by affected communities. NPIs are used to build community preparedness in communities without known COVID-19 disease and to support outbreak responses in communities where local cases or cluster of diseases have occurred.

NPIS for Community Preparedness

CDC recommends individuals and families follow everyday preventive measures:

- Voluntary Home Isolation: Stay home when you are sick with respiratory disease symptoms. At the present time, these symptoms are more likely due to influenza or other respiratory viruses than to COVID-19-related virus.
- Respiratory Etiquette: Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, then throw it in the trash can.
- Hand Hygiene: Wash 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 60%-95% alcohol.
- Environmental Health Action: Routinely clean frequently touched surfaces and objects

Routine use of these measures by individuals and their families will increase community resilience and readiness for responding to an outbreak.

NPIs for COVID-19 Outbreaks in Communities

- Personal Protective Measures. During an outbreak in your community, CDC recommends the everyday preventive measures listed above—especially staying home when sick—and taking these additional measures:
  - Keeping away from others who are sick.
  - Limiting face-to-face contact with others as much as possible
  - Consulting with your healthcare provider if you or your household members are at high risk for COVID-19 complications
  - Wearing a facemask if advised to do so by your healthcare provider or by a public health official
  - Staying home when a household member is sick with respiratory disease symptoms, if instructed to do so by public health officials or a health care provider (Voluntary Home Quarantine)

- Community Measures. If COVID-19 disease is occurring in your community, state and local public health authorities may decide to implement:
  - Temporary closures or dismissals of childcare facilities and schools
  - Other social distancing measures that increase the physical space between people, including:
    - Workplace social distancing measures, such as replacing in-person meetings with teleworking
    - Modifying, postponing, or cancelling mass gatherings.

Decisions about the implementation of community measures will be made by local and state officials, in consultation with federal officials as appropriate, and based on the scope of the outbreak and the severity of illness. Implementation will require extensive community engagement and ongoing and transparent public health communications.
Footnote

Additional information about the evidence base for each NPI and considerations for their implementation is available in: Community Mitigation Guidelines to Prevent Pandemic Influenza — United States, 2017.

Additional Resources:

Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), February 2020

CDC in Action: Preparing Communities for Potential Spread of COVID-19