Coronavirus FAQ

Disease Basics

Q: What is 2019 Novel Coronavirus?

A: The 2019 Novel Coronavirus, or 2019-nCoV, is a new respiratory virus first identified in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China.

Q: What is a novel coronavirus?

A: A novel coronavirus (nCoV) is a new coronavirus that has not been previously identified. The 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV), is not that same as the coronaviruses that commonly circulate among humans and cause mild illness, like the common cold.

Q: What is the source of 2019-nCoV?

A: Public health officials and partners are working hard to identify the source of the 2019-nCoV. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses, some causing illness in people and others that circulate among animals, including camels, cats and bats. Analysis of the genetic tree of this virus is ongoing to know the specific source of the virus.

Q: How does the virus spread?

A: This virus probably originally emerged from an animal source but now seems to be spreading from person-to-person. It’s important to note that person-to-person spread can happen on a continuum. Some viruses are highly contagious (like measles), while other viruses are less so. At this time, it’s unclear how easily or sustainably this virus is spreading between people.

Symptoms

Q: What are the symptoms and complications that 2019-nCoV can cause?

A: Current symptoms reported for patients with 2019-nCoV have included mild to severe respiratory illness with fever, cough, and difficulty breathing.

Q: Should I be tested for 2019-nCoV?

A: If you develop a fever and symptoms of respiratory illness, such as cough or shortness of breath, within 14 days after travel from China, you should call ahead to a healthcare
professional and mention your recent travel or close contact. If you have had close contact with someone known to have 2019-nCoV, you should call ahead to a healthcare professional and mention your close contact and their recent travel. Your healthcare professional will work with your state’s public health department and CDC to determine if you need to be tested for 2019-nCoV.

**Prevention**

**Q: How can I help protect myself?**

**A:** The best ways to protect yourself from respiratory illnesses include:

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds to avoid spreading the virus to others. If soap and water are not readily available, you can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- Do not share food, drink, eating utensils or vapes.
- Avoid contact with others who are sick.
- Isolate yourself when you are sick.
- Call ahead before you go to a doctor’s office or emergency room. Tell them about your recent travel and your symptoms.

**Q: Does CDC recommend the use of facemask in the community to prevent 2019-nCoV?**

**A:** No. CDC does not currently recommend the use of face masks 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.

**Public Health Response and Current Situation**

**Q: What is CDC doing about 2019-nCoV?**

**A:** This is an emerging, rapidly evolving situation and CDC will continue to provide updated information as it becomes available. CDC works 24/7 to protect people’s health. It is CDC’s job to be concerned and move quickly whenever there is a potential public health problem.

**Q: Am I at risk for 2019-nCoV infection in the United States?**
A: The risk of becoming infected with 2019-nCoV remains low in the United States. There are currently 11 confirmed cases in the country and none in the state of CT. It is a rapidly evolving situation and this information could change daily. The latest updates are available on CDC’s 2019 Novel Coronavirus website.

Q: Has anyone in the United States gotten infected?

A: Yes. The first infection with 2019-nCoV in the United States was reported on January 21, 2020. The first confirmed instance of person-person-spread with this virus in the U.S. was reported on January 30, 2020. See the current U.S. case count of infection with 2019-nCoV.

Q: Am I at risk for novel coronavirus from a package or products shipping from China?

A: In general, because of poor survivability of these coronaviruses on surfaces, there is likely very low risk of spread from products or packaging that are shipped over a period of days or weeks at ambient temperatures. Coronaviruses are generally thought to be spread most often by respiratory droplets. Currently there is no evidence to support transmission of 2019-nCoV associated with imported goods and there have not been any cases of 2019-nCoV in the United States associated with imported goods.