PUBLIC HEALTH FACT SHEET

Novel Coronavirus

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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

What is a novel coronavirus?

Novel (meaning "new") coronavirus is a virus strain that has only spread in humans since December 2019. Sometimes referred to as "2019-nCoV" or "COVID-19", this virus was first identified as the source of illness in individuals living in or spending time in Wuhan, China. 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 other 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?

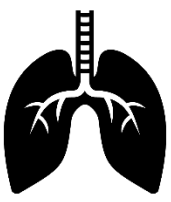
Health experts are still learning about the illness caused by the new virus. Individuals who are infected have had illness that ranged from mild (like a common cold) to severe pneumonia that requires medical care in a hospital. So far, deaths have been reported mainly in older adults who had other health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

What are the symptoms?

People who have been diagnosed with novel coronavirus have reported symptoms that may appear in as few as two (2) days or as long as 14 days after being exposed to the virus. The symptoms may include:

Fever

Cough



Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath

Who is at risk of getting novel coronavirus?

Current, there is a widespread outbreak in Wuhan China, but cases have been identified in a growing number of other international locations including the United States. At this time, the risk in the United States, including New Jersey, remains low for the general public. At this time, there are a small number of cases in the United States. 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 an increased risk. The most up to date travel guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention can be found online at www.cdc.gov/travel

How can novel coronavirus be prevented?

If you are traveling overseas to China or other international locations, follow the CDC's latest guidance at www.cdc.gov/travel

At this time, there are no vaccines available to prevent novel coronavirus infections.

Currently, the novel coronavirus has not been spreading widely in the United States, so there are no additional precautions to recommend for the general public. It is importance to practice the same everyday health precautions that are recommended for reducing the spread of the flu and the common cold. The following steps will help prevent coronavirus:

- Wash hands often with soap and warm water. If not available, use alcohol-based 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 close contact with others
- Cover your mouth/nose with a tissue or the crease of your elbow when coughing or sneezing

How is novel coronavirus treated?

There are no medications specifically approved 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 cases may develop pneumonia and require medical care or treatment in a hospital.

Where can I get more information?

- 24-Hour Public Hotline 1-800-222-1222
- Your doctor, nurse, or clinic
- The Irvington Department of Health and Senior Services at (973) 416-7760 or www.irvington.net
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at: www.cdc.gov
- The New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) website at www.nj.gov/health

Please note, as health experts learn more about novel coronavirus, recommendations may change

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