

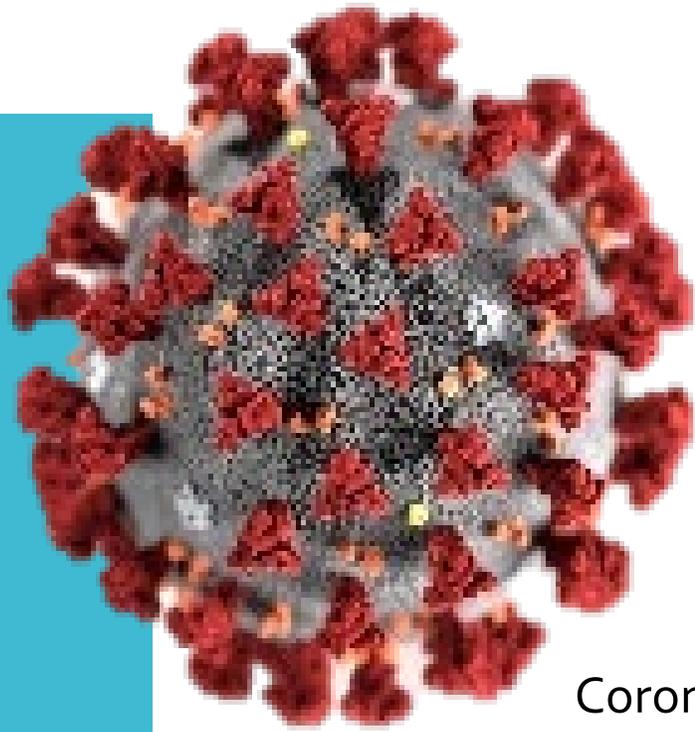


Update on COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

Senate Committee on Health & Welfare

March 11, 2020

Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)



Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses, some causing illness in people and others that circulate among animals, including camels, cats and bats. Rarely, animal coronaviruses can evolve and infect people and then spread between people such as has been seen with recent outbreaks of MERS and SARS.

COVID-19

- While the CDC now expects community spread in some parts of the United States, **the immediate threat to the U.S. remains low**. We are not seeing the same level of spread other countries are seeing. That said, it is important to be prepared.
- Mirroring the federal approach, we are moving from a **containment** approach to a **mitigation** approach.
- **LDH remains in constant contact with the CDC** to ensure that we all have the latest data, are on the same page, and can adapt our plans as conditions change.

Disease Description

What are the symptoms?

For confirmed coronavirus infections, reported illnesses have ranged from infected people with little to no symptoms (similar to the common cold) to people being severely ill and dying. Symptoms can include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing

Is there a vaccine or cure?

No.

- There is no specific antiviral treatment recommended for this infection at this time.
- People infected with COVID-19 receive supportive care to help relieve symptoms.

Disease Description

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:

- Respiratory droplets produced when coughing and sneezing
- Close personal contact
- Touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes

What you can do?

Anyone who recently traveled to China, who experiences fever, cough, or other acute illness should contact a health care provider as soon as possible and mention your recent travel. Please call ahead and inform the health care provider about your travel history.

Take steps to avoid spreading germs from any respiratory diseases by:

- Covering your cough
- Staying home if you are sick
- Washing your hands

Key Terms

- **Close contact** is defined as:
 - a) being within approximately 6 feet (2 meters) of a COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time; close contact can occur while caring for, living with, visiting, or sharing a healthcare waiting area or room with a COVID-19 case
 - or –
 - b) having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (e.g., being coughed on)
- **Self-monitoring** means people should monitor themselves for fever by taking their temperatures twice a day and remain alert for cough or difficulty breathing. If they feel feverish or develop measured fever, cough or difficulty breathing during the self-monitoring period, they should self-isolate, limit contact with others and seek advice by telephone from a healthcare provider or their local health department to determine whether medical evaluation is needed.

Key Terms

- **Quarantine** in general means the separation of a person or group of people reasonably believed to have been *exposed to a communicable disease but not yet symptomatic*, from others who have not been so exposed, to prevent the possible spread of the communicable disease.
- **Isolation** means the separation of a person or group of people known or reasonably believed to be *infected with a communicable disease and potentially infectious* from those who are not infected to prevent spread of the communicable disease. Isolation for public health purposes may be voluntary or compelled by federal, state or local public health order.

What The Public Should Do

What You Should Do:

- **Avoid close contact with people who are sick.**
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- **Wash your hands** often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Limit contact with others as much as possible.
- **Stay home when you are sick.**
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth to prevent spreading germs.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated.

What You Should Not Do:

- Do not travel to China, Italy, South Korea, or Iran
- Do not use facemasks.
 - CDC does not recommend the use of facemasks for the general public to prevent the spread of COVID-19
- Do not show prejudice to people of Asian descent, because of fear of this new virus. Do not assume that someone of Asian descent is more likely to have COVID-19.

State Response Activities

- Staying in contact with the CDC, as well as other local and national partners to share information.
- Sending information to health care providers around the state with current recommendations for screening and testing for COVID-19, as well as to EMS providers regarding proper protection procedures.
- Holding frequent calls with staff to remain apprised of the latest updates.
- Sharing messaging with partners and the public as it becomes available.
- **This is an evolving situation, so information and recommendations are likely to change. We will continue to learn and share new information as it is available.**

State Response Activities

- February 28th – Coronavirus Task Force formed
- March 2nd – Governor held UCG
- Guidance
 - Long term care facilities
 - Hospitals
 - Businesses
 - Schools
 - Faith based & other community groups

Risk Level	Geographic (Travel-associated) Exposures*	Exposures Identified through Contact Investigation
High	Travel from Hubei Province, China	Living in the same household as, being an intimate partner of, or providing care in a non-healthcare setting (such as a home) for a person with symptomatic laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 infection <i>without using recommended precautions</i> for <u>home care</u> and <u>home isolation</u>
Medium (assumes no exposures in the high-risk category)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel from mainland China outside Hubei Province or Iran • Travel from a country with widespread sustained transmission, other than China or Iran • Travel from a country with sustained community transmission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close contact with a person with symptomatic laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 • On an aircraft, being seated within 6 feet (two meters) of a traveler with symptomatic laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 infection; this distance correlates approximately with 2 seats in each direction • Living in the same household as, an intimate partner of, or caring for a person in a nonhealthcare setting (such as a home) to a person with symptomatic laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 infection <i>while consistently using recommended precautions</i> for <u>home care</u> and <u>home isolation</u>
Low (assumes no exposures in the high-risk category)	Travel from any other country	Being in the same indoor environment (e.g., a classroom, a hospital waiting room) as a person with symptomatic laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 for a prolonged period of time but not meeting the definition of close contact
No identifiable risk	Not applicable	Interactions with a person with symptomatic laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 infection that do not meet any of the high-, medium- or low-risk conditions above, such as walking by the person or being briefly in the same room.

Testing

Who should be tested?

- If you develop a fever and symptoms of respiratory illness, such as cough or shortness of breath, within 14 days after travel from China, Italy, Iran, South Korea and Japan
- If you exhibit symptoms and care for someone with respiratory illness who tests negative for flu or other illnesses
- Call ahead to your healthcare provider and mention your recent travel or close contact
- As of March 10, 2020, we have completed 35 tests, three of which have turned out positive.
- We are awaiting testing from the CDC to confirm each result.
- CDC does not recommend testing, symptom monitoring, or special management for people exposed to *asymptomatic people with potential exposures* to SARS-CoV-2 (such as in a household), i.e., “contacts of contacts;” **these people are not considered exposed.**

Coronavirus Resources

OPH Coronavirus Hotline:

1-855-523-2652

The number is open 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM Monday - Friday

Louisiana Department of Health:

<http://ldh.la.gov/coronavirus>

CDC Coronavirus Website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>