

Addressing Emergency Responders Concerns about Novel Coronavirus (NCoV-2019)

1. What is a coronavirus?

Coronavirus is a type of virus that causes diseases of varying severities, ranging from the common cold to more serious respiratory disease. A novel (new) coronavirus is a new strain of coronavirus that hasn't been identified before in humans.

2. Who gets coronavirus?

Coronaviruses are normally found in animals but can be spread to humans. Some coronaviruses are also spread from person to person. Recently, thousands of cases of pneumonia associated with a novel coronavirus in Wuhan City have been identified. Dozens of counties have reported cases and there are cases in the United States, including LA County.

3. How is coronavirus spread?

Human coronaviruses most commonly spread from an infected person to others through:

- 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 before washing your hands
- rarely, fecal contamination
- **Novel coronavirus** is new, and we are learning more each day about transmission patterns and incubation periods. As information becomes available, we will keep you informed.

People who have traveled to Wuhan, China since December 1, 2019, could have been exposed to the virus. Seek medical care if you traveled to Wuhan and develop a fever or respiratory symptoms within 14 days of your return. People who have been in close contact with a person who has a confirmed case of novel coronavirus should seek medical care if they develop fever or respiratory symptoms.

4. What are the symptoms of disease?

Symptoms include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing.
- Severe illness

Complications and outcomes of this virus are still being investigated.



Key Points

- Novel coronavirus is a new virus that hasn't been identified before in humans
- Coronaviruses can be spread through close personal contact, or by touching an object of surface with the virus in it
- Use prevention measures that work to prevent other respiratory infections to prevent novel coronavirus
- Public Health is taking steps to prevent the spread of coronavirus in LA County.

For more information:

**Los Angeles County
Department of Public Health**

<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/>

**Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention (CDC)**

<http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/novel-coronavirus-2019.html>

World Health Organization

<https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus>

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5. How is novel coronavirus treated?

There is no specific treatment for illness caused by a novel coronavirus. However, many of the symptoms can be treated. Treatment will be based on the patient's condition. There is no vaccine for novel coronavirus.

6. How can first responders protect themselves from infection?

First responders can protect themselves against novel coronavirus by following standard environmental infection control procedures and asking all patients about recent travel. First responders can also post signs that ask colleagues to follow standard hygiene practices, such as:

- Washing hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds. Using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not on hand.
- Covering their nose and mouth with their elbow or a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Avoiding touching their eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Limiting close contact, like kissing and sharing cups or utensils, with people who are sick.

7. Since there is a case in LA County, what can I do to protect myself?

Based on current information, even though there is a case in Los Angeles and there are likely to be additional cases, the risk of transmission of coronavirus within LA County remains low. People should continue to engage in their regular activities if they are not ill. As with other respiratory illnesses, there are steps that everyone can take to reduce the risk of getting sick from circulating viruses. **This includes remaining home when ill, washing hands with soap and water frequently, covering coughs and sneezes and, to prevent influenza.**