



# COUNTY OF MONTEREY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Elsa Jimenez, Director of Health

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## Health Advisory

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### Outbreak of 2019 Novel Coronavirus in Wuhan, China

#### ***Current Situation***

The World Health Organization (WHO) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are monitoring an outbreak of respiratory illness caused by 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in Wuhan City, China. To date there have been over 500 cases including 17 deaths, primarily among individuals living in or traveling to the Wuhan area. A limited number of cases have been reported in Thailand, Japan, and South Korea. There has been one case in the United States in an individual who had recently traveled to Wuhan. While transmission dynamics are still being characterized, there is evidence suggesting person-to-person transmission of the virus. Airport screening of travelers arriving from Wuhan was initiated on January 17<sup>th</sup>. Though the risk of infection with 2019-nCoV is very low for the average Californian at this time, Monterey County Health Department urges all providers to take steps now to be able to identify, isolate, and report individuals potentially ill with 2019-nCoV.

#### ***Recommendations for Health Care Providers***

As with any novel pathogen, guidance may change suddenly and frequently.

- **Obtain a travel history on all individuals presenting with respiratory symptoms.**
  - Ask about travel to Wuhan City, China, within the 14 days prior to symptom onset and about contact with travelers from Wuhan City, China.
- **Screen for lower respiratory symptoms** and rule out other common seasonal illnesses.
  - Symptoms include fever ( $\geq 100.4^{\circ}$  F) with cough, shortness of breath, and/or chest pain. Other symptoms may include headache, fatigue, sore throat, and nasal congestion.
    - The entire spectrum of mild illness to severe disease has been reported.
    - If able, test for common seasonal illnesses with similar clinical presentations (e.g., influenza). However, a positive influenza test in a person with recent travel to Wuhan does not rule out 2019-nCoV infection.

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**Health Alert:** Warrants immediate action or attention. **Health Advisory:** Provides information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action. **Health Update:** Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

- **Immediately contact the Monterey County Health Department** if the symptomatic person traveled to Wuhan in the 14 days prior to onset of lower respiratory illness.
  - Call 831-755-4521 during normal business hours and 831-755-5100 after normal business hours. When calling the after-hours line, ask for the Hazardous Materials Team, who will transfer you to the on-call Health Officer.
  - Do not wait for results from other rule out tests (e.g., flu, RSV, etc.) before calling the Health Department.
- **Isolate individuals with suspected 2019-nCoV.** Place a surgical mask on the patient. Move the patient to an airborne infection isolation room (AIIR), if available.
  - If no AIIR is available, place the patient in a single-patient room and close the door.
  - Staff entering the room should use standard, contact, and airborne precautions with the addition of eye protection (e.g., gloves, gown, N95 respirator, and a face shield or goggles).
  - In accordance with CalOSHA guidelines, PAPRs should be used for any aerosol-generating procedures.
- Under the guidance of Monterey County Health Department staff, **collect appropriate specimens.**
  - Nasopharyngeal swab (NP) AND oropharyngeal (OP) swab using synthetic fiber swabs with plastic shafts placed in 2-3 mL of viral transport media (VTM), and
  - Sputum, bronchoalveolar lavage, or tracheal aspirate collected in a sterile dry container. Sputum specimens should be at least 5 mL; 2-3mL of bronchoalveolar lavage or tracheal aspirate is needed, and
  - 5-10 mL of whole blood in a serum separator tube.
  - Additional specimens may also be requested including stool and urine.
  - Specimens should be refrigerated at 2-8° C.
- **Post signage at facility points of entry** requesting individuals who have respiratory symptoms and recently traveled to Wuhan to check in and don a mask.
  - Educate frontline reception staff about screening and infection control procedures.

For more information about testing, diagnosing, and reporting 2019-nCoV, please contact the Monterey County Health Department's Communicable Disease Unit at 831-755-4521.

Additional information is available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.