



COUNTY OF MONTEREY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Elsa Jimenez, Director of Health

Administration Clinic Services Public Health
Behavioral Health Emergency Medical Services Public Administrator/Public Guardian
Environmental Health/Animal Services

Nationally Accredited for Providing Quality Health Services

Health Advisory

February 28, 2020

From: Edward L. Moreno, MD, MPH
Health Officer & Director of Public Health
831-755-4585

Brandon Gates, MPH
Epidemiologist
831-755-4698

Updated 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Person Under Investigation Testing Guidance

Current Situation

Federal, state, and local health officials are closely monitoring the expanding outbreak of respiratory illness caused by a novel coronavirus (named “COVID-19”) that was first detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China. Worldwide there have been over 81,000 cases and 2,700 deaths. Most infections have been linked to travel in mainland China. However, there are an increasing number of infections being reported in other countries including Italy, South Korea, Japan, Iran, and the United States.

The United States reported its first confirmed instance of person-to-person spread of COVID-19 on January 30, 2020. Data indicate some transmission may occur from asymptomatic individuals; however, it is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. There are currently 9 cases of confirmed COVID-19 in California, including one individual without history of travel and no known contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case. There are currently no cases among Monterey County residents.

This is a rapidly changing situation. The CDC’s criteria for a person under investigation (PUI) for COVID-19 may change again in the future as additional information becomes available.

Recommendations for Health Care Providers

- **Obtain a detailed travel history on all individuals presenting with respiratory symptoms.**

Patients in the United States who meet the following criteria should be evaluated as a PUI for COVID-19 and considered for COVID-19 testing:

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.

| Clinical Features | & | Epidemiologic Risk |
|--|------------|---|
| 1. Fever or signs/symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g. cough or shortness of breath). | AND | Any person, including health care workers, who has had close contact with a laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 patient within 14 days of symptom onset, or |
| 2. Fever and signs/symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough or shortness of breath) requiring hospitalization. | AND | A history of travel from mainland China, South Korea, Japan, Italy, or Iran within 14 days of symptom onset, or |
| 3. Fever with severe acute lower respiratory illness (e.g., chest x-ray confirmed pneumonia, ARDS) requiring hospitalization and without alternative explanatory diagnosis (e.g., influenza). | AND | No source of exposure has been identified (no history of travel to affected geographic areas listed above and no known contact with a laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 patient). |

- **Immediately contact the Monterey County Health Department if the symptomatic person meets one of the three PUI criteria.**
 - 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.
 - Health Department staff will provide additional guidance.
- **Isolate individuals who meet the PUI criteria**
 - 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.
 - Staff without access to PPE should stay at least 6 feet back from a suspected case.
- **Under the guidance of Monterey County Health Department staff, collect appropriate specimens.**
 - Obtain a nasopharyngeal swab (NP) AND oropharyngeal (OP) swab using synthetic fiber swabs with plastic shafts placed in separate vials of 2-3 mL viral transport media (VTM).
 - Public Health may request additional specimens.
 - Specimens should be refrigerated at 2-8° C until they can be transferred to the Monterey County Public Health Laboratory.

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.

- **Post signage at facility points of entry** requesting individuals who have respiratory symptoms and have recently traveled internationally to alert hospital staff and to don a mask.
 - Download signage in English, Spanish, and Chinese at the California Department of Public Health's website at:
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/nCOV2019.aspx>
 - Educate frontline reception staff about screening and infection control procedures.
- **Monitor stocks of personal protective equipment (PPE)** and implement measures to assure appropriate PPE usage. Check with your PPE suppliers about potential wait lists and delivery delays for PPE.
- **Discuss how your facility would process a suspected COVID-19 patient.** Inpatient facilities should plan for isolating special populations like pregnant women and pediatric patients.
- **Review your facility's emergency operations, surge, and continuity of operations plans.** Have preliminary planning discussions for operations with reduced staffing and higher patient volumes.
- **Review CDC guidance regularly** on evaluating PUIs, infection control strategies, PPE conservation strategies, and clinical management (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>).

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>. Local case status and other information is available on the Monterey County Health Department's website at www.mtyhd.org/2019nCoV.