



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
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Coronavirus: Don't Panic, But Be Prepared

Employers Must Make Decisions on Current Information About This Virus

The rapidly developing outbreak of novel coronavirus (nCoV-2019) in central China is sparking fears of a widespread health threat, a pandemic even, but right now there are as many questions as there are answers. Some cities around the world have declared a crisis and closed schools and non-essential businesses.

Learn more at the Center for Disease Control's website: [CDC Disease Control & Prevention](#)

Preventive Steps

There is no specific or preventative treatment for nCoV-2019. Infected persons "should receive supportive care to help relieve symptoms," CDC says. Authorities are urging individuals to practice these preventive steps, which is wise anyway considering we're still in the flu season:

- Washing your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or at least use a hand sanitizer;
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands;
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick;
- Avoid "presenteeism" – going to work when you are sick. If you are ill, stay home;
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw it away; and
- Frequently clean and disinfect touched objects and surfaces.
- Surgical masks can help prevent infecting others if you are ill but will not prevent you from inhaling germs.

To date, two Californians have been infected with the virus after traveling from Wuhan, China, where the outbreak is believed to have started at a large seafood and animal market. The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says, "the virus likely emerged from an animal source" and became transmittable between humans. The source is believed to have been a snake.

The California patients are from Orange and Los Angeles counties and are being treated at local hospitals. Public health authorities in the Southland say there is a low risk for infection from these cases.

NCov-2019 has been confirmed in three patients in other states including Arizona, but as of yet there is no indication of widespread infection in these United States.

But both the knowns and the unknowns in this evolving situation are troubling. For instance, the Chinese health minister has stated that people can become infectious while the virus is still incubating, meaning they can transmit it without being symptomatic.

American authorities want to travel to China to see the data supporting that assertion. The other question is whether the virus can “travel” on inanimate objects, which could further spread infection. CDC has said that coronaviruses have “poor survivability” on surfaces, and there is a low risk of spread from products or packaging shipped to the United States from China.

The virus is transmitted between humans from coughing, sneezing and touching. Entering through the eyes, nose, and mouth, the virus finds a host cell in the respiratory system and infects it, after which the host cell bursts and infects other cells. The incubation period is up to two weeks.

Symptoms include a runny nose, a cough, a sore throat, and high temperature. After two to seven days, patients will develop a dry cough and mild breathing difficulty. Victims also can experience body aching, gastrointestinal distress, and diarrhea.

Severe symptoms include a temperature of at least 100.4°F, pneumonia, and kidney failure. So far in China, the virus has infected almost 3,000 people and killed at least 81. To date, there have been no deaths in the United States and CDC says the health risk here is “considered low at this time.”

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