

# Guidance for Schools 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. What is contact tracing?

Contact tracing is finding people who were in direct contact with a patient with coronavirus. Contacts are watched for signs of illness for 14 days from the last day that they had contact with the ill person. If the contact develops a fever or other symptoms, they are immediately isolated, tested, and provided with care to prevent the virus being spread further.

### 7. How can I protect myself when I travel?

Novel coronavirus infection is rare. Activities that can prevent the spread of more common respiratory infections, like the flu, can be effective at preventing the spread of novel coronavirus.

If you traveled to Wuhan and feel sick, you should:

- Stay home and avoid contact with others, except for seeking medical care.
- Seek medical care right away. Before you go to a doctor's office or emergency room, call ahead and tell them about your recent travel and your symptoms.
- Don't travel while sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing. Throw the tissue in the trash.

### 8. 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. There is no immediate threat to the general public, no special precautions are required, and people should not be excluded from activities based on their race, country of origin, or recent travel if they do not have symptoms of respiratory illness. 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.**