

# 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

## Frequently Asked Questions

If you have travelled to the Hubei province in the last 14 days, self-isolate for 14 days (stay at home) after leaving Hubei and actively monitor for symptoms. That means do not go to school, university, work, daycare, sporting or social events or religious gatherings.

If you have been in close contact with someone who is ill with novel coronavirus you should self-isolate for 14 days from your last contact and actively monitor for symptoms.

In the past 14 days if you have been to China, actively monitor for symptoms for 14 days after leaving China or your last contact with the ill person.

### General Information

#### **Q: What is the significance of 14 days?**

A: The time from exposure to developing symptoms can take up to 14 days. In order to prevent spreading 2019-nCoV, it is important to take extra precautions during this timeframe such as self-isolation or self-monitoring.

#### **Q: What is 2019-Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)?**

A: Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. They can cause diseases ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV). Some cause illness in people, while others circulate among animals. Some coronaviruses transmit easily from person to person while others do not.

2019-nCoV is a new virus that has not been previously identified. At present it is causing mild to moderately severe symptoms and some deaths, mostly in China. There is evidence of person-to-person transmission, usually by close contact. As with new viruses, further details will be available as we learn more.

**Q: What are the symptoms? How would I know if I have this illness?**

A: Common symptoms are fever and respiratory symptoms such as cough, shortness of breath, or breathing difficulties. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, kidney failure and even death. Older people or those with chronic illnesses may be at higher risk for a more severe form of the disease.

**Q: Is there a vaccine that protects against 2019-nCoV ?**

A: Currently, there is no approved vaccine that protects against coronaviruses, including 2019-nCoV.

**Q: How is 2019-nCoV treated?**

A: Like most respiratory illnesses, most people with 2019-nCoV illness will recover on their own. There is no specific treatment for disease caused by 2019-nCoV. Severe or worsening symptoms may require supportive treatment in hospital.

**Q: Can the infection spread easily?**

A: The infection transmits via coughing and sneezing within 2 meters. It can also be spread by touching surfaces with the virus on it and then touching your mouth, nose or eyes before washing your hands. Therefore, isolation at home or hospital is important to prevent transmission.

**Q. I've heard on the news that it is important to self-isolate. What does it mean to self-isolate?**

A. Self-isolation means the patient is considered well enough to not require admission to hospital and can remain in their home. That means that individuals should not attend work, school, daycare, university, social, sporting or cultural events or religious gatherings. The patient should have the ability to care for their symptoms including being able to drink enough liquids. Refer to the [Self Isolation Information Sheet](#) for more information.

**Q: What is the difference between “self-isolate” and “self-monitor”?**

A: Self-isolation is a precautionary approach used to reduce the risk of spreading 2019-nCoV from some people who have been in an area of high disease spread (Hubei) or in close contact with a person with 2019-nCoV. These individuals should not attend

work, school, daycare, university, social, sporting or cultural events or religious gatherings. These individuals may not have any symptoms or they may have mild symptoms that can be managed at home. If symptoms worsen, call HealthLine 811 for assessment and direction.

Self-monitoring is keeping a close watch for symptoms in themselves or their dependents. When there are no symptoms, they can continue with their daily activities like attending school or work. At the first sign of symptoms, such as increase in body temperature or development of a cough or sore throat, individuals should self-isolate and call HealthLine 811 for assessment and direction.

## **Risk in Saskatchewan**

### **Q: What happens if there is a confirmed case of the virus in Saskatchewan?**

A: Although public health officials anticipate that there will be additional cases of 2019-nCoV in Canada, the role of public health is to limit the spread through education and surveillance. **The risk of spread in Canada is currently low. 2019-nCoV** is a respiratory illness, and there are best practices for individuals and health care providers to protect against the spread of respiratory illnesses.

### **Q: What is Canada doing to prevent further spread into our country?**

A: Travelers coming from Wuhan and other parts of China are expected to enter Canada through the Vancouver, Toronto, or Montreal international airports. The Public Health Agency of Canada has measures in place at several Canadian airports to help identify any travelers returning to Canada who may be ill and to raise awareness among travelers about when they should self-isolate and who to call when they arrive at their final destination.

### **Q: Why is the overall risk to Canadians low?**

A: Though it is likely that there may be limited human-to-human spread of the 2019-nCoV between close contacts (e.g. family members or caregivers of people with the infection), there has been no indication at this time that this coronavirus is easily spread beyond those close contacts.

The Public Health Agency of Canada is also sharing information and working with federal, provincial and territorial partners and public health authorities to maintain

Canada's preparedness to reduce the potential risk of introduction and spread of this virus in Canada.

**Q. Should I be concerned with packages or goods arriving from China?**

A: There is no concern with goods arriving from Wuhan or elsewhere in China.

## **What You Can Do To Protect Yourself**

**Q: How do I protect myself against 2019-nCoV?**

A: Currently, there is no approved vaccine that protects against coronaviruses in humans.

As a respiratory illness, the best method to protect yourself against 2019-nCoV is to practice everyday preventive actions, including:

- Practice proper cough and sneezing etiquette (into the bend of your elbow);
- Wash your hands often with soap and water; if soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer;
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands;
- Maintain safe food practices; and
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

**Q: I have a respiratory illness. Should I isolate myself?**

A: If you have travelled to the Hubei province in the last 14 days or been in contact with someone ill with 2019-nCoV in the past 14 days, self-isolate for 14 days (stay at home) after leaving Hubei (or your last contact with the ill person) and actively monitor for symptoms. That means do not go to school, university, work, daycare, sporting or social events or religious gatherings. Contact public health by calling Healthline 811 for further assessment and direction.

If you have traveled from other parts of China in the past 14 days, you should actively monitor your symptoms closely for 14 days. At the first sign of even mild symptoms such as cough or fever, you need to self-isolate and contact public health by calling

Healthline 811 for further assessment and direction. That means do not go to school, university, work, daycare, sporting or social events or religious gatherings.

If you have not recently travelled to China, or have not been in contact with anyone who has recently travelled to China and who was ill, you likely have a common respiratory infection such as a cold or influenza. Most symptoms can be treated at home. Treat the symptoms and do not return to school or work until you are better. You should seek medical attention if symptoms do not improve or become worse. Tell your health care provider if you have returned from China in the past 14 days.

**Q: I have heard that a person may be carrying 2019-nCoV for up to 14 days without showing symptoms. Should people returning from China self-isolate for 14 days?**

A: If an individual has 2019-nCoV, they are at the greatest risk to others when they have symptoms -- particularly a cough -- based on best information on how this respiratory illness is transmitted. If you have no symptoms, the risk of transmitting the virus to others is low. People travelling from Hubei province should self-isolate after leaving Hubei for 14 days even if they have no symptoms due to the high transmission in that province.

Travelers returning from other parts of China must actively monitor for symptoms for 14 days. If there are no symptoms present, the individual may attend school or go to work any time within that 14 day time period. If they develop even mild symptoms, they are to self-isolate immediately and call HealthLine (811) to determine the best course of action. Refer to [Self-Isolation Information Sheet](#) for details on active symptom monitoring.

**Q: Should I wear a surgical mask to protect myself from 2019-nCoV?**

A: There is no evidence that surgical masks protect people who are not sick. The World Health Organization does not recommend the use of any masks if you do not have a travel history and respiratory symptoms. If you have respiratory symptoms such as cough or difficulty breathing and a relevant travel history, you should wear a surgical/procedure mask when seeking medical care at a health facility. If you are going to a healthcare facility for treatment of your respiratory illness and do not have a mask, ask for one at the admission desk and one will be provided to you.

**Q: Should I wear masks to protect myself as a caregiver in the home?**

A: If HealthLine, public health officials or your healthcare provider have advised you to self-isolate, you may be cared for at home. If you are providing care to someone with suspected or confirmed 2019-nCoV at home, it's recommended to keep distant from an affected individual as much as possible. Wash hands frequently, preferably using soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. Wear a surgical mask when in the same room with the affected individual and dispose of the mask immediately after use. Wash hands immediately following removal of the mask. Eye protection is also recommended.

## **Workplace and School Considerations**

**Q: Our workplace/school has people who have travelled to China. Should they stay home until they know they do not have 2019-nCoV?**

A: At this time, people who have traveled from Hubei province should self-isolate for 14 days.

People who have traveled from other parts of China must actively monitor for symptoms and if they develop a cough or fever should self-isolate and call HealthLine (811) to determine the best course of action. If the person does not have symptoms of a cough or fever, they can go to work or to school.

**Q. How do we self-isolate in situations of shared living (eg. family homes, University dorms, apartments, etc)?**

A: If the patient is in a situation where they are sharing living accommodations such as a dorm room at a university, can they be temporarily accommodated elsewhere or can roommates/family members temporarily relocate? In cases where there may be several people with symptoms awaiting test results, consider co-locating those with symptoms until results are confirmed. Refer to [Self Isolation Information Sheet](#) and [Infection Control Tips](#) for more information.

If an ill person is sharing accommodations with someone who might be vulnerable to infection, such as someone who has a suppressed immune system (e.g. from cancer treatments or immunosuppressive medications), is pregnant, an infant or over 65 or

has a chronic illness, relocation is advised to reduce the risk of severe illness for the vulnerable person.

More advice is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-self-isolation-for-patients-undergoing-testing/guidance-for-nhs-clinicians-on-home-isolation-of-a-patient-while-being-tested-for-wuhan-novel-coronavirus>

**Q: I am worried about a coworker who has recently traveled and I want to work from home/not be in the office. Can my manager approve that?**

A: At this time risk is low in Canada and Saskatchewan. Screening measures are in place for international travelers. People who have traveled from Hubei or had close contact with someone who is ill with 2019-nCoV are being asked to self-isolate for 14 days from their last contact.

If you are concerned that someone in your workplace has traveled recently, speak with your manager.

If anyone is showing symptoms (cough, fever, difficulty breathing) they should call HealthLine (811) to determine the best course of action.

**Q. Where can I find more information?**

A: Saskatchewan has set up a dedicated page to keep members of the public informed. Visit [www.saskatchewan.ca/coronavirus](http://www.saskatchewan.ca/coronavirus) – more information will be added as it becomes available.