

# Frequently Asked Questions – CoVID-2019

Updated Thursday, February 13, 2020

## What is novel coronavirus?

Novel coronavirus is a new respiratory virus first identified in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in December 2019. The virus has caused an outbreak in China, and cases are being reported in a growing number of other countries, including the United States. The disease caused by novel coronavirus is called CoVID-2019. [See information about 2019 Novel Coronavirus on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) website](#)

## Where did the novel coronavirus come from?

The novel coronavirus may have started as an infection of animals in China, and then moved to infect people.

## Is Marin County Public Health investigating any cases of coronavirus now? How many people have been tested?

There are currently no confirmed cases in Marin County residents. Health officials will make an announcement if there is a confirmed case. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) is collecting data on the number of Californians tested, and the [CDC is updating national numbers of tested people on its website](#)

## How does the virus spread?

Most often, coronavirus spreads from person-to-person. Respiratory droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby. This is similar to how influenza and other respiratory pathogens spread.

## What are the symptoms of novel coronavirus?

People infected with novel coronavirus have reported symptoms that range from mild discomfort to severe illness requiring hospitalization. Symptoms can include fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

## If I have fever, cough, or shortness of breath, do I have novel coronavirus?

It is cold and flu season now, and most people have symptoms of illness that are not related to novel coronavirus. If you have been in China within the past 14 days and you have fever, cough, or shortness of breath, contact your healthcare provider right away and tell them about your travel. Be sure to call ahead before you visit the office, clinic, or hospital, so that the healthcare provider can prepare for your visit.

## What should I do if I recently traveled to China?

Given the increasing spread of novel coronavirus in China, the CDC issued new guidance for local health departments to monitor returning travelers for 14 days.

By federal order, as of **February 3, 2020**:

- Foreign nationals returning from China will not be allowed entry into the U.S. unless they are immediate family of U.S. citizens or permanent residents.
- All U.S. citizens returning from Hubei Province, China will be subject to a mandatory 14-day quarantine by the federal government.
- U.S. citizens returning from other parts of mainland China who have fever, cough, or shortness of breath will undergo mandatory quarantine. This does not include travel to Hong Kong, Macau, or Taiwan. If this applies to you, please call Marin County Public Health at (415) 473-4163.
- U.S. citizens returning from other parts of mainland China who DO NOT have fever, cough, or shortness of breath will undergo a 14-day self-quarantine at home with monitoring by their local health department. This does not include travel to Hong Kong, Macau, or Taiwan. If this applies to you, please call Marin County Public Health at (415) 473-4163.

Marin County Public Health recommends that travelers who returned from China **BEFORE February 3** monitor themselves for 14 days after their last day in China. If

symptoms (fever, cough, or shortness of breath) occur during that time, please contact your healthcare provider, inform them of your travel history and self-isolate at home pending their advice. Do not go to work, school or social events if you have these symptoms.

## How can I help protect myself from getting sick with novel coronavirus?

The CDC currently recommends avoiding all non-essential travel to China where most cases of novel coronavirus are occurring. Use everyday preventive actions to keep from catching an infection, including novel coronavirus:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Get a flu shot to prevent influenza, which has symptoms like novel coronavirus.

## Should I be wearing a mask to prevent getting novel coronavirus?

Good hand washing techniques are the most effective ways to prevent yourself from getting sick. This means washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If you have a fever or cough, a face mask is recommended to prevent spread of germs to others around you. Because novel coronavirus is not spreading in the Bay Area, there is no recommendation to wear masks currently. However, if you choose to wear a face mask, it is important to understand that face masks are not a substitute for hand washing.

## Is it safe to travel to China?

The CDC currently recommends that travelers avoid all non-essential travel to China. Stay up to date with [CDC's travel health notices related to this outbreak](#).

## Is there a vaccine for novel coronavirus?

Currently, there is no vaccine available to protect against novel coronavirus.

## What is the treatment if someone gets sick with novel coronavirus?

The treatment right now is to take care of the symptoms. There is no specific treatment for novel coronavirus. Patients who are confirmed to have novel coronavirus will be cared for by healthcare professionals in partnership with Marin County Public Health.

## How are passengers from China being screened at San Francisco International Airport (SFO)?

All incoming flights to SFO from China are screened by the CDC. If people come off a plane with symptoms, the CDC will work directly with pre-identified hospitals according to disease prevention and containment procedures.

## What is Marin County Public Health doing to protect our health?

Marin County Public Health is working closely with the [California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\)](#), the CDC, and our regional partners to protect our community. We are working with local healthcare providers to identify, test and support individuals who may be infected with Coronavirus and prevent further spread. We will be providing regular communication and guidance to the Marin community.

## Where can I get more information?

Visit Marin County Public Health's website <https://www.marinhhs.org/coronavirus>. You can also find more information by accessing the links listed below.

## Links and Documents for the Public

- [California Department of Public Health Novel Coronavirus 2019 Page](#)

- [US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) Novel Coronavirus 2019 Page](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions and Answers from CDC](#)
- [Questions and Answers on Coronaviruses from the World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#)