



DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Promoting and protecting health, well-being, self-sufficiency, and safety of all in Marin County.



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PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

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Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

Dear Colleagues:

This advisory provides information about Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) activity, disease recognition, testing, reporting procedures, and additional resources for Marin County clinicians. Marin County Health and Human Services (H&HS) Communicable Disease Prevention and Control (CDPC) unit is closely monitoring the situation as it is rapidly evolving. As new information and evidence becomes available, updates will be made.

Current Situation

Yesterday, January 21, 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) confirmed the first case of 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in the United States. The patient returned to the United States from Wuhan City on January 15, 2020. Coronavirus was suspected based on the patient's travel history and symptoms, and laboratory testing at the CDC confirmed 2019-nCoV infection.

On January 8, the CDC issued a [health alert](#) in response to a reported cluster of pneumonia of unknown etiology (PUE). The following week the CDC issued [interim guidance](#) for health care providers. Travelers from Wuhan City to the United States are now undergoing entry screening for symptoms associated with 2019-nCoV at three U.S. airports: San Francisco (SFO), New York (JFK), and Los Angeles (LAX).

There is increasing evidence of person-to-person transmission, which raises the level of concern about local transmission of the virus. The CDC is describing the risk of 2019-nCoV to the American public as being low at this time.

Actions requested of providers

1. Possible 2019-nCoV cases should be reported immediately by phone to Marin County H&HS Communicable Disease Prevention and Control (CDPC) by phone (415 473 4163). After hours, contact the Health Officer on-call (415 499 7237).
2. Identify and evaluate patients as a Person Under Investigation (PUI) if they meet the following criteria (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/clinical-criteria.html>):
 - a. Fever AND symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); AND,
 - i. History of travel from Wuhan City, China (up to 14 days prior to symptom onset); or,

- ii. Close contact with a person who is under investigation for 2019-nCoV while that person was ill.
- b. Fever OR symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); AND,
 - i. Close contact with an ill laboratory-confirmed 2019-nCoV patient up to 14 days prior to symptom onset.

Background Information

In December 2019, the CDC began closely monitoring an outbreak of a 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in Wuhan City, Hubei Province. Chinese health authorities have confirmed more than 40 cases with a novel coronavirus as the origin of the outbreak. Reportedly, most patients had epidemiological links to a large seafood and animal market. The market was closed on January 1, 2020. On January 20, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) [reported](#) 282 confirmed cases of 2019-nCoV.

Clinical Presentation

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses, some causing respiratory illness in people and others circulating among animals, including camels, cats and bats. Rarely, animal coronaviruses can evolve and infect people and then spread between people, such as has been seen with Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS). While severe illness, including illness resulting in several deaths, has been reported in China, other patients have had milder illness and been discharged. Symptoms associated with this virus have included fever, cough and respiratory distress.

Limited information is available to characterize the spectrum of clinical illness associated with 2019-nCoV. The CDC clinical criteria for 2019-nCoV have been developed based on what is known about MERS-CoV and SARS-CoV and are subject to change as additional information becomes available.

Treatment

No vaccine or specific treatment for 2019-nCoV infection is available; care is supportive.

Infection Prevention and Control

When person-to-person spread has occurred with SARS and MERS, it is thought to happen via respiratory droplets with close contacts like influenza and other respiratory pathogens. The situation regarding 2019-nCoV is still unclear.

CDC. Guideline for Isolation Precautions: Preventing Transmission of Infectious Agents in Healthcare Settings (Updated July 2019)
<https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/pdf/guidelines/isolation-guidelines-H.pdf>

Travel advisory

On January 21, 2020, the CDC issued a [Level 2 Travel Health Notice](#) (“practice enhanced precautions”) for travelers to Wuhan City. Travelers to Wuhan, [China](#),

should avoid contact with animals (alive or dead), animal markets, and sick people. Travelers from Wuhan to the United States, and other countries, may be asked questions about their health and travel history upon arrival.

Laboratory

Specimens should be collected as soon as possible once a PUI is identified regardless of symptom onset. The CDC recommends collecting three specimen types (if possible) for Real time Reverse Transcription-Polymerase Chain Reaction (rRT-PCR) testing: lower respiratory, upper respiratory and serum specimens. Maintain [proper infection control](#) when collecting specimens. Store specimens at 2 to 8°C. Contact Marin County H&HS Communicable Disease Prevention and Control by phone (415 473 4163) to coordinate testing with the Public Health Laboratory.

Reporting

Clinicians and laboratories must report suspected 2019-nCoV cases to Marin County H&HS Communicable Disease Prevention and Control by phone (415 473 4163).

Additional Information

World Health Organization (WHO). <https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/novel-coronavirus-2019.html>

California Department of Public Health (CDPH). <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/nCOV2019.aspx>

Sincerely,

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