2019 Novel Coronavirus: What You Need to Know

The following is important information about the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV). Student Health Services (SHS) has had no cases to date, and the likelihood of an incident on our campus is very low. With that said and as always, SHS recommends that all members of the campus community remain informed and take every day precautionary measures to prevent respiratory-like illnesses.

What is novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV)?

2019-nCoV is a newly identified coronavirus that is causing an outbreak of pneumonia illness. It was first identified in December 2019 in the city of Wuhan, Hubei Province, China.

Since then, cases have been identified in multiple other countries including the U.S.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), human coronaviruses are common throughout the world and usually cause mild to moderate illness in people.

What is the risk?

The CDC considers this new virus a public health concern based on current information. However, the immediate health risk to the general US public is considered low at this time. The CDC and the World Health Organization are closely monitoring the situation and providing ongoing guidance.

Symptoms and transmission:

Symptoms may be flu-like, ranging from mild to serious, and include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing.
Person-to-person spread is occurring in China, although it is unclear exactly how it is transmitted and how easily the virus spreads between people.

**Prevention:**

There is no vaccine to prevent this virus, and the CDC advises that the best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus.

Currently, 2019-nCoV has not been found to be spreading in the US, so there are no additional precautions recommended for the general public to take.

Here are everyday actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses:

- 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 with unwashed hands.
- 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 vaccine.

**Recommendations for people with respiratory symptoms:**

If you have symptoms of fever, cough, and/or difficulty breathing AND in the last 14 days:

- You traveled to/through Wuhan, OR
- You visited another affected region in China, OR
- You had close contact with someone who had traveled to an affected region in China and had respiratory symptoms
You should:

- Seek medical care right away. Before you come to Student Health Services, emergency room, or other medical facility call ahead and tell them about your presenting symptoms and your recent travel.
- Avoid contact with others.
- Do not travel while sick. Please do not get on public transportation or just arrive at Student Health Services. Call Student Health at 570-941-7667 or University Police at 570-941-7888. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.