



Date: January 28, 2020

To: All Medical Care Providers

From: Maggie Park, M.D., Interim Health Officer

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "MP".

**Please distribute to all  
medical providers and other  
relevant staff in your office.**

## **Health Alert**

### **2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)**

#### **Situation:**

An outbreak of respiratory illness caused by the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) began in December 2019 in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. Symptoms may include fever, cough, runny nose, headache, sore throat, and shortness of breath or difficulty breathing. Clinical presentations have ranged from asymptomatic or mild illness to severe illness. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has been closely monitoring this rapidly evolving situation. There are now over 4500 confirmed cases and over 100 deaths in China, as well as over 60 traveler cases in multiple countries, including 5 in the United States. Of the 5 cases in the United States, 2 are in California - an individual in Los Angeles County and an individual in Orange County. There have been no deaths in the United States, and all cases have been of people with travel history from China. There has been no community transmission anywhere in the United States. There have been no cases in San Joaquin County. Although this outbreak is a serious health concern, the immediate health risk to the general public is considered low.

#### **Background:**

Reports from China demonstrated an epidemiological link of the outbreak to a large seafood and animal market, suggesting a possible zoonotic origin. Available virus genetic sequences from patients suggest a likely single, recent emergence of this virus from an animal reservoir. Research is ongoing and what is not yet known is how easily or sustainably this virus is spreading, whether infected persons are infectious before they show clinical signs and symptoms, and the spectrum of clinical illness. Based on experience with the SARS and MERS coronaviruses, the incubation period is suspected

to be 2-14 days. Although transmission dynamics are still under investigation, it is known that person-to-person spread is occurring. There is no vaccine or specific treatment for 2019-nCoV. Care is supportive.

CDC has issued a Level 3 Warning, recommending that travelers avoid all nonessential travel to Hubei Province, China. CDC has implemented health screening of travelers with direct or connecting flights from Wuhan arriving at airports in New York (JFK), San Francisco (SFO), Los Angeles (LAX), Chicago (O'Hare) and Atlanta (Hartsfield-Jackson). This screening may be expanded to include a total of 20 airports.

**Recommendations for Providers:**

1. CDC has developed “Interim Guidance for Healthcare Professionals” and providers should consistently monitor CDC’s website for updated recommendations at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
2. Any patient presenting with possible 2019-nCoV should be asked to wear a surgical mask and be evaluated in a private room with the door closed, ideally an airborne infection isolation room if available. Healthcare personnel should use standard precautions, contact precautions, airborne precautions, and eye protection (gloves, gown, goggles or face shield, and a fit tested N95 or higher lever respirator upon room entry).
3. Obtain travel history for all patients presenting with fever and acute respiratory illness.
4. Evaluate and discuss with public health any patient who meets the following criteria as a Patient Under Investigation (PUI):

Clinical features and epidemiologic risk	
Clinical Features	& Epidemiologic Risk
Fever <b>and</b> symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough, difficulty breathing)	and In the last 14 days before symptom onset, a history of travel from Wuhan City, China. – or – In the last 14 days before symptom onset, close contact with a person who is under investigation for 2019-nCoV while that person was ill.
Fever <b>or</b> symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough, difficulty breathing)	and In the last 14 days, close contact with an ill laboratory-confirmed 2019-nCoV patient.

Note: It is anticipated that the above criteria will soon be expanded to include a history of travel from all of mainland China.

5. Immediately notify infection control personnel at your healthcare facility and immediately report any suspect cases to San Joaquin County Public Health Services by calling (209) 468-3828. After hours and on weekends, call (209) 468-6000.

**Additional Information:**

At this time, confirmatory diagnostic testing is only being conducted at the CDC. Laboratory testing is being conducted using real reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR).

For any PUI, CDC recommends collection of lower respiratory, upper respiratory, and serum specimens. Guidance on specimen collection can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/guidelines-clinical-specimens.html>

Information on infection control practices can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/infection-control.html>

Guidance on preventing spread in homes and communities is available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/guidance-prevent-spread.html>

Posters that can be used for signage in health care facilities are available on the CDPH website in English, Spanish, and Mandarin <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/coronavirus%20poster.pdf>