



# What you need to know about the Novel Coronavirus

## What is novel coronavirus?

The Alaska Department of Health and Social Services is closely monitoring an outbreak of respiratory illness caused by a novel (new) coronavirus named 2019-nCoV. This virus was first detected in China in December 2019; it spreads from person-to-person and has the potential to cause severe illness and uncommonly death. Four well-known strains of coronaviruses regularly circulate in human populations globally and are a frequent cause of upper respiratory infections; 2019-nCoV is new so it's called the novel coronavirus.

## How does the 2019-nCoV virus spread?

There are still many things that are unknown about this new virus. At this time, spread of the virus is believed to happen in the following ways:

- When an infected person coughs or sneezes next to others
- Through close contact (e.g., hugging, kissing, shaking hands)
- Possibly by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching the mouth, nose, or possibly eyes

## How severe is the 2019-nCoV virus?

Reported cases have ranged from mild illness (similar to a common cold) to severe pneumonia and uncommonly death. Persons at increased risk for severe illness include older adults and persons with underlying medical conditions.

## What are the symptoms?

Symptoms are likely to appear 2–14 days after exposure, and include fever, cough, and shortness of breath.



FEVER



COUGH



SHORTNESS  
OF BREATH

## What is the current travel guidance from CDC?

See [wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel](https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel) for the latest travel guidance from the CDC for recommendations for travel to China.

## How can I prevent contracting or spreading respiratory infections?

Steps you can take to prevent contracting flu and the common cold will also help prevent contracting the 2019-nCoV:

- Wash hands often with soap and water; if not available, use hand sanitizer
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid contact with people who are sick
- If you're sick, stay home and avoid close contact with others and cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing

***There is no vaccine currently available to prevent 2019-nCoV infections.***

For more information, contact the Alaska Section of Epidemiology: (907) 269-8000 or after hours (800) 478-0084.