

Novel Coronavirus (2019 nCoV from Wuhan, China) General FAQ for Patients

Updated 23-Jan-2020

Q. What is novel coronavirus?

- A. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that can cause respiratory symptoms similar to that of the common cold. They usually spread through contaminated surfaces, direct contact or in the air by coughing / sneezing from an infected individual. People usually get infected with common human coronaviruses in the fall and winter. In rare instances, animal Coronaviruses can evolve and infect people and then spread person to person such as with [MERS](#) and [SARS](#). Past MERS and SARS outbreaks have been complex, requiring comprehensive public health responses. ***Please note normally coronaviruses are a common cause of respiratory illness and may show up on viral testing, but this travel screen only relates to the 2019 novel coronavirus that is causing the current outbreak from Wuhan, China.***

Q. What is the current situation with the first patient?

- A. Currently there is one confirmed case in Snohomish County (first known case in the U.S.). The case was announced on January 21, 2020. The patient is a male in his 30s and a Snohomish County resident who is currently at Providence Regional Medical Center Everett for observation and is in stable condition. The Patient had recently returned from Wuhan, China, where an outbreak of novel coronavirus has been underway since December 2019.

Q. What are the risks for getting the virus?

- A. The risk to the general public is low, given that there is only one case identified in the U.S. and the lack of evidence of easy spread. In addition, even in China there have been relatively few cases identified to date in relation to the size of their population. Coronaviruses are primarily spread through respiratory droplets, which means to become infected, people generally have to be within six feet of someone who is contagious and have droplets land on them. This is very different from airborne diseases like measles.

Q. What are we doing to ensure the safety of our patients and caregivers?

- A. On Tuesday, January 21, interim guidance documents were released to help caregivers navigate responding to this new disease. There is an epidemic screening tool in Epic to better help identify patients that may have the novel coronavirus from Wuhan, China. Additional communications will be sent as developed.

Q. What are the symptoms of coronavirus?

- A. Most coronaviruses cause respiratory illnesses, including cough and fever. The common cold is a type of coronavirus. Symptoms may include runny nose, headache, cough, sore throat and/or fever.

Q. Is there a vaccine for 2019 coronavirus?

- A. At this time, there is no vaccine for coronavirus. You can help prevent the spread of illness by washing hands often with soap and running water, staying home if you are sick, avoiding close contact with others who are sick, covering your coughs or sneezes with a tissue, and cleaning and disinfecting objects and surfaces.

Q. What should I do if I get sick?

- A. If you have traveled from the Wuhan area of China or been in close contact with someone with confirmed novel coronavirus 2019 and feel sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, call your health care provider BEFORE going to get care and tell them about your symptoms and travel. They can provide you instructions for seeking care so that you do not expose others. There are many causes of fevers, coughs, and other respiratory symptoms. Most clinics have surgical masks that you may be asked to wear while in the clinic. Please protect others and wear a mask if asked. Wash your hands. Cover your cough or sneeze. If you are ill, stay home.

Q. How is this virus treated?

- A. Treatment is supportive care for symptoms, fluid intake, and isolation/observation. There is no cure for this virus.