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Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

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Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses which may cause illness in animals or humans. In humans, several coronaviruses are known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). The most recently discovered coronavirus causes coronavirus disease COVID-19.

This new virus and disease were unknown before the outbreak began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. Possible vaccines and some specific drug treatments are under investigation. They are being tested through clinical trials. WHO is coordinating efforts to develop vaccines and medicines to prevent and treat COVID-19.

Symptoms

Symptoms COVID-19 can appear from 2 and up to 14 days after exposure. Symptoms include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. *The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, tiredness, and dry cough. Some patients may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat or diarrhea.*

Some people become infected but don't develop any symptoms and don't feel unwell. **Most people (about 80%) recover from the disease without needing special treatment.**

Around 1 out of every 6 people who gets COVID-19 becomes seriously ill and develops difficulty breathing. People with certain underlying health conditions (heart disease, lung disease, and diabetes), as well as, older individuals seem to be at greater risk of serious illness. People with fever, cough and difficulty breathing should seek medical attention.

Illness due to COVID-19 infection is generally mild, especially for children and young adults. However, it can cause serious illness: about 1 in every 5 people who catch it need hospital care. It is therefore quite normal for people to worry about how the COVID-19 outbreak will affect them and their loved ones.

Transmission

There are simple ways to limit the transmission COVID-19 include : avoid close contact with people who are sick; avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth, stay home when you are sick, cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash, wash your hands frequently for a minimal of 20 seconds. Hand sanitizer does not replace soap and water, but can be used in addition when it is not easily accessible, and clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

Follow CDC's recommendations for using a facemask:

CDC *does not* recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19. Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of facemasks is also crucial for health workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).

Current Travel Considerations

Level 1 Travel Health Notice: Hong Kong

Level 2 Travel Health Notice: Japan

Level 3 Travel Health Notice: Iran, Italy, China, South Korea

What does this mean?

The CDC recommends that individuals avoid all nonessential travel to these areas. Upon arrival to the United States, travelers will have to undergo health screening. Those who have had additional potential for exposure or having symptoms of COVID-19 (difficulty breathing, cough, fever), will be required to entered to a process of self monitoring for a minimum of 14-days to limit exposure to other individuals.

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