From the Elsevier Connect Novel Coronavirus Resource Center

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) are closely monitoring the world health effects of the new or novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV). The Elsevier Clinical Solutions Nursing, Allied Health and Patient Engagement team created a frequently asked questions (FAQ) page to summarize the recommendations made by the CDC and WHO, for quick access reference for interprofessional clinicians and the public.

Nursing and Allied Health Professional FAQ

1. What do we know about the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV)?
   Historically, coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. Some cause illness in people and others cause illness in animals, including camels, cats, and bats. In December, China notified the World Health Organization of several cases of human respiratory illness that appeared to be linked to an open seafood and livestock market in the city of Wuhan, suggesting animal-to-person spread. This is a new virus that is being investigated. The virus identified as a novel coronavirus, is now called 2019-nCoV. The virus spreads person-to-person and causes a respiratory illness.

2. How contagious is this virus?
   At present, it is unclear how contagious the virus is between people. It appears to be spread person-to-person by respiratory droplets, which is similar to the spread of other viruses, including the common cold, influenza, and other coronaviruses such as SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) and MERS (Middle East respiratory syndrome).

3. What is the incubation period for this virus?
   According to the CDC, the incubation period is thought to be 2 to 14 days.

4. Is this virus treatable and is there specific treatment?
   At this time, there are no antimicrobial agents (e.g., antibiotic, antiviral) known to treat this virus. There is no vaccine. Treatment is supportive care depending on the severity of the illness.

5. What isolation precautions should be used with 2019-nCoV?
   Standard, airborne, and contact precautions should be used. If hospitalized, patients should be in a private room with the door closed, preferably in an airborne infection isolation room. Patients should wear a surgical mask (no info available about N-95 mask use) and health care team members should wear eye protection in addition to standard PPE.

6. Questions that may be helpful to triage your patients.
   - In the last 14 days have you:
     - traveled outside of the country?
     - been on an airplane?
     - been exposed to anyone that travels frequently or has been out of the country, specifically Wuhan, China?
     - been near anyone who is suspected or confirmed as having 2019-nCoV?
   - Are your immunizations up to date, such as influenza and pneumonia vaccines?
• Do you or does anyone living in your household have a history of immunosuppression or chronic diseases, such as asthma, COPD, or other lung-related illness?
• Are there any infants, small children, or older adults living with you?

7. **What steps can I take as a health care provider to protect myself?**
   Excellent hand hygiene and standard personal protection equipment (PPE), including eye protection, should be used when interacting with these patients. Persons entering the room should follow **standard, airborne (droplet), and contact precautions**.

8. **What tests are used to confirm a diagnosis?**
   Three specimens are collected: lower respiratory (sputum), upper respiratory (nasopharyngeal, oropharyngeal), and serum. If possible, stool and urine should also be collected. Diagnostic testing for 2019-nCoV should be sent to the CDC (in the United States) or another regional, national, or international laboratory equipped to run these tests (outside of the United States). Refer to the specimen protocols from the [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html) and [WHO](https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019) for specific details.

9. **How long will it take to confirm a diagnosis?**
   No specific turnaround time for test results has been provided due to the limited laboratory testing sites and the potential for high demand.

**Patient and Family FAQ**

1. **What do we know about the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV)?**
   Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. Some cause illness in people and others cause illness in animals, including camels, cats, and bats. In some cases, the viruses that cause illness in animals can spread to humans. In December 2019, China notified the World Health Organization of several cases of lung disease (*human respiratory illness*) that were linked to an open seafood and livestock market in the city of Wuhan. Scientists have determined that this illness is caused by a new respiratory virus. It has been identified as a novel coronavirus, also called 2019-nCoV. The link to the seafood and livestock market suggests that the virus may have spread from animals to humans. However, since that first outbreak in December, the virus has also been shown to spread from person-to-person.

2. **How is the novel coronavirus spread?**
   It is unclear how easily the novel coronavirus is spread. It appears to be spread from one person to another through droplets from coughing or sneezing. Other viral illnesses are spread in the same way. They include:
   - The common cold.
   - The flu (*influenza*).
   - Other coronaviruses, such as SARS (*severe acute respiratory syndrome*) and MERS (*Middle East respiratory syndrome*).

3. **Am I at risk?**
According to the CDC, the risk of catching the virus is low for the general population. You do not need to worry about coronavirus infection if you do not have a history of travel outside the country, have not come into contact with people who have recently traveled outside the country, and have not provided care for people who are sick.

4. Is there a treatment or vaccine for this virus?
There is currently no vaccine to prevent the coronavirus infection and no medicines (such as antibiotics or antivirals) to treat the virus. A person who becomes ill is given supportive care, which includes rest and fluids. A person may also relieve his or her symptoms by using over-the-counter medicines that treat sneezing, coughing, and runny nose. These are the same medicines that a person takes for the common cold.

5. If someone is exposed to the virus, how long does it take before symptoms start?
Symptoms of novel coronavirus may appear between 2 days and 14 days after a person is exposed to the virus. This time frame is based on previous outbreaks of other coronaviruses. [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/symptoms.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/symptoms.html)

6. What can I do to protect myself and my family from this virus?
You can protect yourself and your family by taking the same actions you would take to prevent the spread of other viruses. The CDC and WHO recommend that you:
- 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.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your elbow when you sneeze or cough. Throw away used tissue at once and wash your hands.
- Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces that people touch often.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick or have a fever or cough.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Stay up to date on all vaccines. Ask your health care provider what vaccines you need.

7. When should I contact my health care provider?
Contact your health care provider if you have symptoms of an infection, such as a fever or cough and you:
- Have traveled outside of the country
- Have come into contact with a person who is suspected to have the novel coronavirus
- Have been near anyone who is known to have the novel coronavirus

8. When should I seek emergency medical care?
You should seek help right away by going to the emergency department or calling 911 if:
- You have trouble breathing
- Your symptoms are getting worse

Inform the health care team, including 911 if you think you were exposed to novel coronavirus

9. How do they test for this virus?
Tests for novel coronavirus are done by the CDC or other regional, national, or international labs that are equipped to run these tests. Your health care provider will collect samples to send for testing. Samples may include:

- Fluid from the nose or mouth (sputum). This will be collected from the upper and lower respiratory tract. To do this, a patient coughs sputum into a sterile cup. A health care provider may also use a swab to collect a sample from the nose and mouth.
- A blood sample.
- A stool and urine sample.

10. How long does the virus last?
There is currently no information about how long this illness lasts. If symptoms are mild, the length of illness may be short – just like that of the common cold. If symptoms are severe, the person may be sick for a longer time and will require more supportive health care.

11. Why are some people admitted to the hospital with this virus?
A person is more likely to be treated in the hospital if he or she:
- Has severe symptoms with novel coronavirus
- Has a chronic illness
- Is taking medicines that suppress the immune system

12. What should I do if I need to travel?
It is likely that more cases of novel coronavirus will be seen both inside China and in other countries. Therefore, be aware that travel may be limited. Travelers may be screened in their own countries or when entering other countries.

- Before you travel, check the [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov) and [WHO](https://www.who.int) websites for country-specific health information, including recommendations for vaccines and medicines.
- If you travel, know the risks involved and take action to protect your health while traveling.
  - You are at higher risk of getting the novel coronavirus if you are traveling to areas with the virus or if you are exposed to travelers from areas with the virus.
  - You can take action to stay safe and healthy. Always wash hands and practice good hygiene to minimize the risk of catching or spreading the virus.