

Our Perspective on the Coronavirus Outbreak

We've been getting a lot of questions from concerned patients about the Coronavirus outbreak in China, so we wanted to give you our perspective on this fast-moving subject.

The Coronavirus from China is a mutation from a group of viruses that commonly cause typical cold symptoms. Symptoms of infection with the mutated virus include cough, fever, and shortness of breath. The virus is spread via airborne droplets from a sneeze or cough. It may take as long as two weeks after getting infected before someone may show symptoms.

So far, there have been more than 40,000 cases of Coronavirus and more than 900 deaths, with the vast majority in China. The World Health Organization has declared a global health emergency. Understandably, this has created a great deal of concern among people on this side of the Pacific.

However, while there is reason to follow the news of this outbreak, to date, there have only been 12 confirmed cases in the U.S., and all had direct contact with someone from Wuhan. In contrast, so far this flu season, there have been an estimated 25,000,000 confirmed cases of influenza, and an estimated 20,000 deaths from influenza in the U.S. alone. The flu doesn't make for good news, because it's not new, so it does not get the same press coverage as the more novel Coronavirus. The Coronavirus could still eventually become a major problem in this country, but as of right now we do not feel there is a significant concern of spread in this country.

With that said, anyone traveling to China should consider postponing or cancelling their trip. In an effort to prevent further cases from entering the U.S., the CDC has deployed public health workers to all major ports of entry, and virtually all travel to and from China has been suspended. Doctors are reporting any suspected cases to the CDC, and anyone with suspected contact or possible infection with the Coronavirus is being quarantined for two weeks.

There is currently no vaccine or specific treatment for Coronavirus. However, the CDC did issue these reminders to prevent the spread of any virus:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if your hands are visibly dirty.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

Please feel free to call us at NVFPA if you have any questions. We will continue to monitor the situation closely.

And remember, it's not too late to get your flu shot!

The Providers at NVFPA