



CORONAVIRUS (2019-nCoV) FACT SHEET

On 31 December 2019, the Government of China reported a cluster of cases of Pneumonia of unknown cause in Wuhan, Hubei Province. A new coronavirus was isolated and eventually identified. Coronaviruses are zoonotic, meaning they are transmitted between animals and people, although several known Coronaviruses are circulating in animals that have not yet infected humans.

1. What are the possible modes of transmission that WHO is currently investigating?

Current information does not allow for the full understanding of the source and extent of human to human transmission and the size of the epidemic. However, two serious scenarios are important to understand, either of which has serious public health consequences and calls for all countries to be prepared:

a. Sustained human to human transmission:

The virus is fit for human to human transmission. This is not usually the case for zoonotic coronaviruses. In this scenario, the virus can transmit quickly especially in densely populated areas.

b. Scattered human to human transmission:

Many spill over events from animal to human with limited human to human transmission. In this scenario, the virus does not pass easily between people, but can pass between close contacts.

2. Signs and Symptoms

According to the current information, the virus can cause mild, flu-like symptoms as well severe diseases, and be fatal in some. The mild disease can progress to a more severe illness. People with existing chronic conditions appear to have increased vulnerability to more severe illness. Older people appear more likely to have greater susceptibility to severe illness.

3. Treatment and vaccine

There are no specific treatments for this novel coronavirus. Treatment is based on clinical presentation. There are no vaccines yet licenced for use.

4. Prevention and control.

a. Reducing the risk of Ebola infection in people

WHO does not recommend any restriction of travel or trade based on the current information. Those travelling to Asia are encouraged to reduce exposure to transmission from a range of illnesses, which include hand and respiratory hygiene, and safe food practices as follows:

- Wash hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub;
- Cover mouth and nose with a medical mask, tissue, or a sleeve or flexed elbow when coughing or sneezing;
- Avoid unprotected close contact with anyone developing cold or flu-like symptoms;
- Seek medical care if you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing;
- When visiting live markets, avoid direct unprotected contact with live animals and surfaces in contact with animals;
- Cook your food and especially meat thoroughly.

b. Controlling infection in health-care settings

Implement standard precautions such as handwashing and correct use of the standard personal protective equipment for all patients at all times. When treating suspected or confirmed 2019-nCoV patients, additional measures may be required. The WHO recommended PPE for health care workers includes gloves, face shield/goggles, mask, scrubs and gown. A particulate respirator (N95 or higher) should be worn when performing aerosol generating procedures.