



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT 2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS** *Information and Resources for Community Members*

**(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.)** -- An outbreak of respiratory illness caused by a 2019 novel coronavirus that originated in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China has been identified. Some patients have had mild illness while a small number have had more severe illness, and a few have died. Cases have been diagnosed in several countries in Asia. No cases have been identified in California.

New information about the 2019 novel coronavirus is being released every day and the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department (SBCPHD) is working to bring this information to local health care providers and community members. Below are common questions and answers regarding this new respiratory illness adapted from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH).

#### **What is 2019 novel coronavirus?**

Coronaviruses are a large group of viruses that are common among animals and humans. In rare cases, animal coronaviruses can be transmitted from animals to humans. This novel coronavirus is a newly discovered coronavirus that has not been previously detected in animals or humans. The source of the novel coronavirus is not yet known.

Early on, many of the patients in the outbreak in Wuhan, China reportedly had some link to a large seafood and animal market, suggesting animal-to-person spread. However, a growing number of patients reportedly have not had exposure to animal markets, suggesting person-to-person spread is occurring. At this time, it is unclear how easily this virus is spreading between people.

#### **What are the symptoms of novel coronavirus?**

Typically, human coronaviruses cause mild-to-moderate respiratory illness. Symptoms are very similar to the flu, including:

- Runny nose
- Headache
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Fever
- Shortness of breath

**-MORE-**

## **LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE TO 2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS ADD 1-1-1**

### **How is novel coronavirus diagnosed?**

Health care providers will assess patients, and if novel coronavirus infection is possible, they will do further testing. At this time, the only laboratory testing for the novel coronavirus is being done at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) laboratory. If a patient is suspected to be infected with the novel coronavirus, public health agencies will work with health care providers to ensure CDC testing can be completed.

### **What is the Treatment for Novel Coronavirus?**

Most people with illnesses due to common coronavirus infections recover on their own. There are no specific treatments for coronavirus infection. For patients who are more severely ill, hospitals can provide supportive care. We are learning more about this novel coronavirus and treatment may change over time.

### **What is the local public health department doing to protect our health?**

SBCPHD is working closely with CDPH and the CDC to respond to the outbreak of this novel coronavirus. SBCPHD is communicating with local health care providers on how to safely and effectively evaluate ill people who have been to China. SBCPHD will continue to monitor the situation, work with partners to identify any possible cases, provide information and consultation to ensure that possible cases are managed safely, support laboratory testing, and implement recommendations from the CDC.

### **What if I have symptoms?**

If you have traveled to China between December 15, 2019 and now, and you have become ill with fever, cough or shortness of breath, call your health care provider. Please be sure to tell your health care provider about your travel history.

You can also take the following precautionary measures:

- Avoid contact with sick individuals
- Wash hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds
- Get a flu shot

With symptoms that are similar to the flu, it is another important reason to get a flu shot. Influenza activity remains at high levels across the Northern Hemisphere: everyone 6 months of age and older should be immunized to help protect from the dangers of flu.

For the most up to date information regarding the 2019 novel coronavirus, please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.