

Dear Colleagues,

CANADEM has received many queries about the 2019 novel coronavirus. Efforts are underway to understand more about the origins of the virus and how it spreads. The aim of this document is to provide some clarity on what we do and don't know about the virus and what it may mean to you.

### ***Frequently Asked Questions and Answers on the 2019 novel Coronavirus***

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

A: 2019 novel coronavirus, or 2019-nCoV, is a respiratory virus first identified in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, in 2019. Learn about 2019 novel coronavirus:

[https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2Fnovel-coronavirus-2019.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2Fnovel-coronavirus-2019.html)

#### ***Q: What is a novel coronavirus?***

A novel coronavirus (CoV) is a new coronavirus that had not been previously identified. Coronaviruses - whose name reflects their crown-like shape - originate in animals (usually mammals or birds) and "jump" species, mutating to be able to infect humans.

#### ***Q: What is the source of 2019 novel coronavirus?***

A: Public health officials are working hard to identify the source of the 2019- nCoV. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses, some of which cause illness in humans, while others circulate among animals, including camels, cats and bats. Reports that many patients in the initial phase of the outbreak in Wuhan, China, had some link to a large seafood and animal market, suggest a possible animal origin for the virus. The genetic tree of this virus is currently being analysed to identify its source. Two other types of coronavirus that affected humans - SARS, and MERS - originated from animals (civet cats and camels respectively).

#### ***Q: What are the symptoms of 2019 novel coronavirus and what complications can it cause?***

A: Patients with 2019-nCoV have reported symptoms including mild to severe respiratory illness with high temperature, coughing and difficulty breathing. Read about 2019-nCoV symptoms: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/symptoms.html>

#### ***Q: If I have a cough and a fever, is it likely to be the 2019-nCoV infection?***

A: Coughing and fever are non-specific symptoms of any respiratory infection - for example, the seasonal flu — so these alone would not indicate that you've been exposed to 2019-nCoV. As most cases are currently occurring in China, travel history and exposure are important factors to consider — have you visited the area in the past 14 days or had close contact with someone who has been there and shows respiratory symptoms? If the answer to these questions is no, it is unlikely that your symptoms are due to the 2019-nCoV infection.

#### ***Q: How does the virus spread?***

A: This virus probably originated from an animal source but now seems to be spreading from person to person. It's not yet clear how easily 2019-nCoV spreads from person to person. With MERS and SARS, person-to-person infection is thought to have happened mainly via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes, similar to how influenza and other respiratory pathogens spread. For MERS and SARS, human contagion has generally occurred between close contacts.

**Q: How can I help protect myself?**

A: Visit the Center for Disease Control (CDC) 2019 Novel Coronavirus Prevention and Treatment page to learn about how to protect yourself from respiratory illnesses, like 2019-nCoV: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention-treatment.html>. Helpful advice can also be found on the World Health Organization's webpage: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

However, the most effective preventive measure is to wash your hands frequently or, when this is not possible, to use disinfectant hand gel. **Please note:** masks, whether surgical or fine particle, are not useful for someone without symptoms of a respiratory infection. On the other hand, if worn by a coughing, febrile person, masks can decrease the chance of their spreading germs.

**Q: What should I do if I had close contact with someone who has 2019-nCoV?**

A: Information for people who have had close contact with a person confirmed to have, or being evaluated for, 2019-nCoV infection is available online:

[https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-prevent-spread.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fguidance-prevent-spread.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-prevent-spread.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fguidance-prevent-spread.html)

**Q: Is there a vaccine?**

A: Currently, there is no vaccine available to protect against 2019-nCoV.

**Q: How can 2019 novel coronavirus be treated?**

A: There is no specific antiviral treatment recommended for 2019-nCoV infection. People infected with 2019-nCoV should receive supportive care to help relieve symptoms. Learn about 2019-nCoV Treatment: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention-treatment.html>

**Q: If I think I have the 2019-nCoV infection, what should I do?**

A: If you have a fever (above 38° C) and a cough, and you have visited China in the past 14 days or had contact with someone that has and shows these symptoms, do not come to the office, limit your contact with other people and call the relevant medical advisor.

As further precaution, wear a surgical mask, always cough into your bent elbow and wash your hands frequently.

**For more information:**

- UN Department of Health Management and Occupational Safety and Health (DHMOOSH)'s Novel Coronavirus (2019-NCoV): <https://hr.un.org/page/coronavirus-disease-covid-19>
- Travel Health Information for UN Personnel: <https://hr.un.org/page/travel-health-information>
- Frequently Asked Questions and Answers on the Novel Coronavirus: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>
- World Health Organization's Update on the situation: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/situation-reports>

- World Health Organization's infographics: [https://prod-static.humanitarianbooking.wfp.org/public/media/ckeditor\\_uploads/2020/01/28/who-2019-coronavirus-infographics-wfpv1.pdf](https://prod-static.humanitarianbooking.wfp.org/public/media/ckeditor_uploads/2020/01/28/who-2019-coronavirus-infographics-wfpv1.pdf)