

Novel Coronavirus Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is happening?

There has been an outbreak of a new illness called “novel coronavirus.” While the illness started in Wuhan, Hubei province, China, the situation is quickly changing.

What do we know about novel coronavirus?

People with the virus have been confirmed in a number of countries including the United States. Since this virus is very new, health authorities are carefully watching the situation and how this virus spreads. This situation is quickly changing, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Prevention and Controls (CDC) provides updated information as it becomes available.

What is County of Santa Clara Public Health Department doing?

Public health officials are taking action to protect the public. The CDC and the World Health Organization (WHO) are closely monitoring the outbreak. Public health departments, including at County of Santa Clara, are working to identify anyone who might be infected to prevent further spread of the outbreak. To date, no confirmed cases have been identified in California or Santa Clara County.

Is my family at risk of getting novel coronavirus?

At this time, there is low risk to Santa Clara County residents, unless they recently traveled to Wuhan or were in close contact with someone who was ill who recently traveled in that area.

What should I do now to protect my family?

1. Get your flu shot to protect against flu, which can produce symptoms similar to novel coronavirus.
2. Wash your hands with liquid soap and water, rub for at least 20 seconds.
3. Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, sleeve or arm. Do not use your hands.
4. Avoid touching your face, especially your eyes, nose, and mouth.
5. Stay home if you are sick with any respiratory symptoms, such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath, or if you are feeling tired.
6. Try staying away from large groups of people.
7. CDC recommends against traveling to Wuhan and Hubei province:
wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/warning/novel-coronavirus-wuhan-china

Should we avoid going to public events?

Please remember that flu and other respiratory viruses are very common right now, and large group gatherings are places where viruses often spread. Remember, if you are not feeling well or are experiencing any cold, flu, or other symptoms, stay home to avoid spreading germs.

What happens if someone has traveled to China and they are now sick?

In the unusual event that a child or staff member is identified who recently traveled from Wuhan, China and has symptoms of respiratory illness, they should be sent home from school/work and the school or workplace should immediately contact Public Health.

What are symptoms of novel coronavirus?

Symptoms may include fever, fatigue, cough, or shortness of breath. Some people may have pneumonia or more serious illness.

I'm sick. How do I know if it is coronavirus or something else, like the flu?

If you have traveled to Wuhan, China in the 14 days before your symptoms started or have been in close contact with someone ill who has been there, please contact your doctor.

How is novel coronavirus spread? Are my children and family at risk?

It is unclear how easily or frequently the virus may spread from person to person, so it's important to practice good hygiene (e.g. cover your cough and sneeze, wash your hands, avoid touching your face). We are still learning about this new virus, but at this time the risk is low to Santa Clara County residents.

Should we cancel travel plans to Asian countries?

At this time, the CDC has issued a Level 3 travel warning, recommending to avoid all nonessential travel to Wuhan, China and the surrounding Hubei province. Please check the CDC website for current advisories to other countries: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/

I'm feeling stressed and overwhelmed, who can I talk to?

An anonymous crisis line is available 24 hours, 7 days a week including holidays at 1-800-704-0900 (Mental Health Services) and/or SAMHSA's Disaster Distress Helpline 24 hours at 1-800-985-5990 or text TALKWITHUS to 66746 (Press 2 for Spanish).