



Arkansas Department of Health

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Governor Asa Hutchinson

Nathaniel Smith, MD, MPH, Secretary of Health

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Interim Guidance on Outbreak of 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in Wuhan, China

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) continues to closely monitor an outbreak of a 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China that began in December 2019. This is a new virus, and information is evolving on a daily basis. An outbreak of pneumonia of unknown cause in Wuhan City was initially reported to WHO on December 31, 2019. Initially, most patients had epidemiological links to a large seafood and animal market. The market was closed on January 1, 2020. However, person-to-person spread is now suspected. Currently, there are over 300 confirmed cases and 6 deaths. Cases have now been confirmed outside of China in Thailand (2 cases), Japan (1), Taiwan (1), South Korea (1), and now the USA (1), **all in travelers who had been in Wuhan City** in the previous 14 days. The US case was a traveler returning from Wuhan to Washington state whose diagnosis was confirmed on Monday, January 20. To date there have been no cases in Arkansas.

The CDC has already begun screening travelers who have traveled from or through Wuhan, China (including Wuhan Tianhe Int'l Airport) at 3 major airports: New York (JFK), San Francisco, and Los Angeles. Screening will begin at Chicago and Atlanta airports later this week. All travelers from Wuhan will have their itineraries re-routed through one of these 5 airports so that all travelers from Wuhan are screened. Attached, find a card given to screened travelers who are well.

Recommendations for Health Care Providers

Limited information is available about the spectrum of clinical illness associated with 2019-nCoV. No vaccine or specific treatment for 2019-nCoV infection is available. Care is supportive. **Health care providers should obtain a detailed travel history for patients being evaluated with fever and acute respiratory illness.** ADH recommends initially asking about any travel to China in the last 14 days. Patients in the United States who meet the following criteria should be evaluated as a Person Under Investigation (PUI) in association with the outbreak of 2019-nCoV in Wuhan City, China:

1) Fever **AND** symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough, shortness of breath)
—**AND** in the last 14 days before symptom onset,

- History of travel to/from Wuhan City, China
-or-
- Close contact with a person who is under investigation for 2019-nCOV.

2) Fever **OR** symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough, shortness of breath)
—**AND** in the last 14 days before symptom onset,

- Close contact with an ill laboratory-confirmed 2019-nCoV patient.

The above criteria are also available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/clinical-criteria.html>. These criteria are intended to serve as guidance for evaluation. Patients should be evaluated and discussed with the Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) on a case-by-case basis. **We also want to emphasize that clinicians should also, at the same time, proceed with normally indicated testing for pneumonia or similar respiratory infections (influenza, multiplex respiratory panel, CXR, etc.)**

Interim Health Care Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Patients Under Investigation for 2019-nCoV

Although the transmission dynamics have yet to be determined, CDC currently recommends a cautious approach to patients under investigation for 2019-nCoV (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/clinical-criteria.html>).

- **Such patients should be asked to wear a surgical mask** as soon as they are identified and be evaluated in a private room with the door closed, ideally an airborne infection isolation room if available.
- **Health care personnel entering the room should use the following precautions:**
 - **standard precautions**
 - **contact precautions**
 - **airborne precautions**
 - **use eye protection (e.g., goggles or a face shield)**
- Immediately notify your health care facility's infection control personnel and ADH.

Additional Infection Control Practices Resources

Guideline for Isolation Precautions: Preventing Transmission of Infectious Agents in Health Care Settings (<https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/isolation/index.html>)

Recommendations for Reporting, Testing, and Specimen Collection

Health Care providers should **immediately** notify both infection control personnel at their health care facility and ADH in the event of a Person Under Investigation for 2019-nCoV. ADH will help coordinate submission of samples.

CDC recommends collecting and testing multiple clinical specimens from different sites, **including all three specimen types**

- **Lower respiratory (sputum or BAL)**
- **Upper respiratory (nasopharyngeal swab AND oropharyngeal swab)**
- **Serum**

Additional specimen types (e.g., stool, urine, whole blood) should be collected and stored, if possible.

Specimens should be collected as soon as possible once a PUI is identified regardless of time of symptom onset. Additional guidance for collection, handling, and testing of clinical specimens is available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/>. At this time, diagnostic testing for 2019-nCoV can be conducted only at CDC. Testing for other respiratory pathogens should not delay specimen shipping to CDC. If a PUI tests positive for another respiratory pathogen, after clinical evaluation and consultation with ADH, they may no longer be considered a PUI. This may evolve as more information becomes available on possible 2019 nCoV co-infections.

For the latest information from the CDC on this outbreak: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/>

For a sign to prompt patients to discuss travel with you:

https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/images/uploads/pdf/Travel_notice_generic_10112019.pdf

We at ADH are here to help consult on the evaluation of such cases and keep you updated as this outbreak evolves. Please call the Outbreak Response Section at

- 501-537-8969 Mon-Fri 8am-4:30pm, or
- 1-800-554-5738 after hours or on weekends for any assistance.

Sincerely,

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