



Novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

Information for Parents

An outbreak of novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) was detected in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in late December 2019.

Exclusion from School or Early Childhood Centres

If your child has travelled to mainland China within the past 14 days, you must isolate them in your home for 14 days after leaving mainland China. If your child has been in close contact with a confirmed case of novel coronavirus, you must isolate them in your home for 14 days after last contact with the confirmed case. Children in these circumstances are not to attend schools or early childhood centres and should not engage with other students.

If your child develops symptoms within 14 days of leaving mainland China or within 14 days of last contact with the confirmed case, you should arrange for them to see their usual doctor for urgent assessment. You should telephone the health clinic or hospital before they arrive and tell them of their travel history or that they have been in contact with a confirmed case of novel coronavirus. Their doctor will liaise with Public Health authorities to manage their care. Children must remain isolated either in your home or a healthcare setting until Public Health authorities inform you it is safe for them to return to their usual activities.

What does isolate in your home mean?

People who must be isolated should not attend public places, in particular work, school, childcare or university. Only people who usually live in the household should be in the home. Do not allow visitors into the home. There is no need to wear masks in the home. Where possible, get others such as friends or family, who are not required to be isolated to get food or other necessities for you. If you must leave the home, such as to seek medical care, wear a surgical mask if you have one.

What is this virus?

Coronaviruses can make humans and animals sick. Some coronaviruses can cause illness similar to the common cold and others can cause more serious diseases, including Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS).

The virus seen in mainland China is called 'novel' because it is new. It has not been detected before this outbreak. Most people currently infected live in, or have travelled to mainland China. There have been some cases of 2019-nCoV reported in other countries. It is likely that the virus originally came from an animal, and there is now evidence that it can spread from person-to-person.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms include (but are not limited to) fever, cough, sore throat, fatigue and shortness of breath.

What if my child is sick now or within 14 days of being in mainland China?

If your child develops mild symptoms:

- call your usual doctor or local hospital and tell them your child may have novel coronavirus infection; and
- when you get to the doctor's clinic or hospital, tell them again that your child may have novel coronavirus.

If your child has serious symptoms such as shortness of breath:

- call 000 and ask for an ambulance; and
- tell the paramedic that your child may have novel coronavirus infection.
- your doctor will test your child for 2019-nCoV and provide advice on management. You will also be contacted by Public Health officers who will provide you with more information.

Students with symptoms must be excluded from attending schools and early childhood centres. If they have been diagnosed with 2019-nCoV students may not attend school or childcare until public health authorities inform you it is safe for them to return to their normal activities. If students have other respiratory illness (i.e. flu), they should not attend school irrespective of whether there is a concern about 2019-nCoV.

How can I help prevent the spread of 2019-nCoV?

- teach and encourage your children to wash their hands often with soap and water before and after eating as well as after attending the toilet;
- avoid contact with others by keeping children home if they are unwell;
- teaching children to cough and sneeze into their elbow; and
- while it's not possible to avoid touching, kissing, and hugging children, parents and guardians should do their best to follow these steps too.

Where can I get more information?

Visit the Australian Government Department of Health homepage at www.health.gov.au

Call the National Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080.

Contact your state or territory public health agency:

- ACT call 02 5124 9213 during business hours or (02) 9962 4155 after hours
- NSW call 1300 066 055
- NT call 08 8922 8044
- Qld call 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84)
- SA call 1300 232 272
- Tas call 1800 671 738
- Vic call 1300 651 160
- WA call 08 9328 0553