General Information: COVID-19

Q: What is the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)?

Q: What is a novel coronavirus?
A: Human coronaviruses are common worldwide. Common human coronaviruses usually cause mild to moderate upper-respiratory tract illnesses, like the common cold. A novel coronavirus (CoV) is a new coronavirus that has not been previously identified.

Q: What is the source of COVID-19?
A: “Public health officials and partners are working hard to identify the source of COVID-19. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses, some causing illness in people and others that circulate among animals, including camels, cats and bats. Analysis of the genetic tree of this virus is ongoing to know the specific source of the virus.”

Q: What are the symptoms and complications of COVID-19?
A: “Current symptoms reported for patients with COVID-19 have included mild to severe respiratory illness with fever, cough, and difficulty breathing. Read about COVID-19 Symptoms. CDC believes at this time that symptoms of COVID-19 may appear in as few as 2 days or as long as 14 after exposure.”

If someone is not feeling well or appears ill it is always a good idea to suggest that they visit Health & Wellness for care.

Q: I am feeling very anxious and worried given all of the unknowns about COVID-19’s impact and spread. Is this normal? What can I do to take care of myself?
A: Feeling anxious, stressed, scared, and/or worried are normal reactions to the unknowns about a new virus, what we see and hear around us, and things that feel outside of our control. These emotions can help motivate us to be informed and take actions to protect ourselves and others:

- Get adequate sleep, eat well, move your body, do some things that help to relax your body and mind—these actions also strengthen our immune systems!
- Know the facts about the virus and getting accurate information from reliable sources.
- Take breaks from media, including social media.
- Acknowledge your feelings instead of suppressing them. It can be helpful to write down your feelings and list what is making you feel this way. Acknowledging feelings also includes acknowledging how others feel. Telling yourself or others not to worry, be stressed, or panic only tends to make ourselves and others feel worse.

If you find the emotions you are experiencing are impacting your daily life and functioning, reach out for help. Students can contact Psychological and Counseling Services (PACS) 603-862-2090. Employees can contact the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) 1-800-424-1749.
Transmission of COVID-19

Q: Who is susceptible to the novel coronavirus?

A: “People of all ages can be infected by COVID-19. Older people, and people with pre-existing medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease) appear to be more vulnerable to becoming severely ill with the virus.”

Everyone should take steps to protect themselves from the virus, for example by washing their hands often and covering coughs and sneezes.

Q: How does the virus spread?

A: “This virus likely emerged from an animal source originally, but now seems to be spreading from person-to-person. It’s important to note that, in person-to-person transmission, some viruses are highly contagious (like measles), while other viruses are less so. At this time, it’s unclear how easily this virus is spreading between people. While CDC considers this a very serious public health risk, based on current information, the immediate health risk from COVID-19 to the general American public is considered low at this time. Here is what we do know about the spread of newly emerged coronaviruses.”

Q: Isn’t anyone who traveled to an infected area at risk for having the virus?

A: We cannot assume that those who have traveled to an infected area represent a risk of infection. However, we encourage travelers from high-risk areas to get checked out at UNH Health & Wellness or by their primary care clinician for their protection and for the community’s health. Trained medical staff are available to assess concerns. Visit: www.unh.edu/health for information about services, hours of operation, and appointment scheduling.

Q: Should people be concerned about handling packages or other items delivered from countries with the virus?

A: “There is still a lot that is unknown about the newly emerged 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and how it spreads. In general, because of poor survivability of these coronaviruses on surfaces, there is likely very low risk of spread from products or packaging that are shipped over a period of days or weeks at ambient temperatures. Coronaviruses are generally thought to be spread most often by respiratory droplets. Currently there is no evidence to support transmission of COVID-19 associated with imported goods and there have not been any cases of COVID-19 in the United States associated with imported goods.”

Q: How does my risk of contracting the flu differ from the coronavirus?

A: “CDC estimates that so far this season there have been at least 32 million flu illnesses, 310,000 hospitalizations and 18,000 deaths from flu.”

General Illness Prevention

Q: What can I do to help stop the spread of colds, flu and/or the coronavirus?

A: While the immediate risk of this new coronavirus to the American public is believed to be low at this time, everyone can do their part to help respond to this emerging public health emergency by following the CDC recommendations for everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses (colds, flu, Coronavirus), including:
• Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based (at least 60% alcohol) hand sanitizer.
• Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
• Stay home and avoid public places when sick (i.e. social distancing)
• Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
• Avoid being within 6 feet (close contact) of a person who is sick
• Avoid sharing drinks, smoking/vaping devices, or other utensils or objects that may transmit saliva
• Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
• Get a flu vaccine.

**Q: Should individuals with an underlying health condition isolate themselves or avoid classes to minimize their risk of being infected with the coronavirus?**

A: There are no current recommendations for students with underlying health conditions to avoid classes or isolate themselves. If recommendations were to change, medical guidance would be communicated to students as to protection, avoidance, and self-care strategies. Health & Wellness is prepared to partner with students’ medical providers to discuss specifics. Health & Wellness has Health Resource Nurses who serve as the contact point for concerned students, and students can contact them for information and guidance by calling (603) 862-9355.

Employees with an underlying health condition should work with their healthcare provider for information and guidance.

**Q: Should I be cleaning my residence hall, apartment, etc. with industrial-strength cleaning solutions?**

A: Perform routine environmental cleaning. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces (e.g., doorknobs, light switches, countertops). Read [CDC's interim environmental cleaning and disinfection recommendations](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cleaning-disinfecting.html) for community members and people isolated in home care. Use all cleaning products according to the directions on the label.

If you live on campus, in order to avoid the risk of a chemical reaction with disinfectants being used by UNH Facilities, Housing and Dining, please do not purchase or bring any cleaning agents for use on campus, particularly chlorine-based products, without prior approval from Environmental Health and Safety.

**FYI -** Staff in UNH Facilities, Housing and Dining have increased routine environmental cleaning including disinfecting frequently touched surfaces on campus like handrails, doorknobs and light switches, and will be placing disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizer in all classrooms, residence and dining halls, and areas used by the general public to help decrease the spread of viruses.

**Q: What do I do if my roommate is sick with cold or flu?**

A: If your roommate or someone you have frequent/close contact with is sick:

• Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
• Don’t share household items like towels, eating utensils, dishes, cups, etc.
• Clean common surfaces, such as doorknobs, handles, room surfaces, light switches etc. Use a standard household disinfectant. Wash your hands after cleaning the area.
• Be helpful, but protect yourself. You can still care for your roommate. You can offer to pick up some Kleenex or get them a meal, but try to avoid close contact with your sick roommate.
• Remind sick roommates to prevent others from getting sick. The sick person should remember to cover coughs and sneezes and to wash hands frequently (especially after coughing, sneezing, or disposing of a used tissue in the trash). The sick person should also wear a mask any time there is close contact (within six feet) of others or when using common areas, like a shared bathroom. If your sick roommate is not covering sneezes and coughs, you should consider wearing a mask when you are within close proximity (within six feet).

Following these precautions will decrease your risk of becoming ill, but if you are sharing space with someone who is sick, you should monitor yourself. If you develop influenza or pneumonia-like symptoms (fever, cough, sore throat) after contact with the sick person contact Health & Wellness, 603-862-9355 for information and care.

Q: Is it safe to attend class when others are coughing and sneezing?

A: Coughing and sneezing is one way to spread illnesses and diseases such as colds, flu. Therefore, it is important for individuals who are ill to practice hygiene as recommended by the CDC: https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/etiquette/coughing_sneezing.html

If a person is ill, they should try and distance self from others include staying home from work, classes or social activities. Those who are well should avoid close contact with people who are sick.

Q: Do I need to wear a mask?

A: Routine use of a mask is not recommended for healthy individuals.

Anyone diagnosed with the coronavirus should wear a mask any time there is close contact (within six feet) of others or when using common areas, like a shared bathroom. If your sick roommate is not covering sneezes and coughs, you may also consider wearing a mask when you are within close proximity (within six feet).

Travel Information & Country-Specific Precautions

Q. What are the current CDC travel advisories?

A. Travel advisories currently include the following countries:

• Level 3 Travel Warning (avoid all nonessential travel due to widespread community transmission): Mainland China, South Korea, Italy and Iran
• Level 2 Travel Alert (practice enhanced precautions due to sustained community transmission): Japan
• Level 1 Travel Watch (practice usual precautions but multiple instances of community spread have been reports): Hong Kong

Q: Are there any restrictions for domestic travel?

A: Currently, there are no restrictions for domestic travel within the United States or to U.S. territories. However, this is a rapidly evolving situation and we recommend that anyone traveling domestically take regular illness prevention precautions such as hand washing and covering coughs and sneezes. Check here for updates from the CDC.

Q. What if I recently traveled to Mainland China, South Korea, Iran, and/or Italy and am not experiencing symptoms?
A. The CDC recommends:

- CDC recommends that travelers avoid all nonessential travel to these countries.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions may be at increased risk for severe disease.
- Travelers should avoid contact with sick people and clean their hands often by washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with 60%–95% alcohol.
- Travelers should stay home and monitor their health during travel and for 14 days after returning to the United States.
- Travelers who feel sick with fever or cough or difficulty breathing should seek medical advice. Call ahead before you go to a doctor’s office or emergency room.
- Household members such as family members, including children, of quarantined individuals are not required to quarantine. As long as they remain asymptomatic, they can leave the home and can go to public places like school and work. If the person being quarantined develops illness, household members must then also stay home on quarantine.

Q: What if I recently traveled to Mainland China, South Korea, Italy, and/or Iran and I am experiencing symptoms?
A: If you spent time in Mainland China, South Korea, Italy, and/or Iran during the past 14 days and feel sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing:

- Seek medical care right away. Before you go to a medical office or emergency room, call ahead and tell them about your recent travel and your symptoms. Avoid contact with others. You can reach UNH Health & Wellness at 603-862-9355.
- Do not travel while sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.
- Clean your hands by washing them with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains 60%–95% alcohol immediately after coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose. Soap and water should be used if hands are visibly dirty.

Q: What are the enhanced precautions recommended for Japan?
A: Enhanced precautions for travel to Japan include:

Because older adults and those with chronic medical conditions may be at higher risk for severe disease, people in these groups should discuss travel with a healthcare provider and consider postponing nonessential travel.

If you travel to Japan, take the following steps:

- Avoid contact with sick people.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Clean your hands often by washing them with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at 60%–95% alcohol. Soap and water should be used if hands are visibly dirty.
- Travelers should monitor their health during travel and after travel and limit interactions at large gatherings with other for 14 days after returning to the United States.
- Household members such as family members, including children, of quarantined individuals are not required to quarantine. As long as they remain asymptomatic, they can leave the home and can go to public places like school and work. If the person being quarantined develops illness, household members must then also stay home on quarantine.
Domestic & Local Updates

Q: How many cases of the coronavirus are there in the United States?

A: With the evolving nature of the virus in the United States, check here for updated information regarding the coronavirus in the U.S.

Q: Aren’t there cases of the virus on the UNH campus?

A: There are NO cases of the virus on the campus at this time. NH Division of Public Health Services has identified two presumptive positive cases in NH.

Q: How will I know if there is a case of the coronavirus on campus?

A: If there is a confirmed case of the coronavirus on campus, the University will inform the UNH community and provide information on how the campus will prevent the spread of the illness and what each member of the community do to help prevent further spread of the virus.

Q: Where can I get more information on the virus and what UNH is doing to protect the community?

A: The Health & Wellness website has regular updates on the virus and UNH’s efforts to protect the community: https://www.unh.edu/health/health-alerts/health-alert-novel-new-coronavirus

Additional Resources

- U.S. Department of State: https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html
- U.S. Department of State, Smart Travelers Enrollment Program (STEP): https://step.state.gov/
- CDC Spring Break Travel: https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/spring-break-travel
- World Health Organization (WHO): https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus
- 2019 Novel Coronavirus: What Campuses Need to Know
- Johns Hopkins University-Coronavirus