

28 January 2020

Novel Coronavirus Advice to Parents

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome back to the 2020 school year! We are looking forward to an exciting year of learning. I have been given some advice regarding the management of the Coronavirus from the Department of Health and Department of Education. It states:

'The Department of Education is currently working with the Ministry of Health to monitor and respond to the unfolding international novel coronavirus situation. Advice has been distributed to NSW Public Schools in accordance with advice received from the Ministry of Health.'

There has been a small number of cases of confirmed Novel Coronavirus in New South Wales. In accordance with national public health guidelines, exclusions only apply for those who are a:

- *Confirmed case of Novel Coronavirus – exclude until medically cleared*
- *Close contact of a confirmed case of Novel Coronavirus – exclude for 14 days since last contact with the confirmed case*

Staff or students who have recently returned from overseas and are well, and are not close contacts of a confirmed case, are able attend work or school as normal.

Close contact is defined as living in the same household, 15 minutes face-to-face contact with a person with confirmed coronavirus in any setting, or sharing a closed space with a person with confirmed coronavirus for more than 2 hours.

The Ministry of Health has processes in place to identify any close contacts of cases confirmed in Australia. Advice about not attending school would be provided to these close contacts by the Ministry of Health.

Consistent with current guidelines, staff and students who are unwell with respiratory illness should remain at home until symptoms resolve. In accordance with our current practice if any child becomes unwell we will implement our infection control guidelines and follow the advice provided by the Ministry of Health as appropriate. We will continue to monitor the situation closely and take advice received from NSW Ministry of Health to ensure we are responding to this situation appropriately.

Further information and updates are available via NSW Health website;

Factsheet: <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/alerts/Pages/coronavirus.aspx>

FAQs: <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/alerts/Pages/coronavirus-faqs.aspx>

In addition, at Lindfield Public School, we will ensure that we teach effective hygiene practices including thorough hand washing with soap, covering coughs and sneezes with an elbow. We will advise students to avoid close contact with other students during sport and play activities.

Students are permitted to wear face masks. If you are concerned that your children may be at risk of infection feel free to keep them at home and seek medical advice. I have copied the Fact sheets in English and simplified Chinese.

If you have further questions, feel free to contact the school. Let's all work together as a community to do our best to manage this challenging and dynamic situation. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding at this time.

Kind regards
Megan Lockery
Principal

FACT Sheet - About novel coronavirus – NSW Department of Health

What are coronaviruses?

- Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are known to cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).
- They are found worldwide in humans and animals.

What is a novel coronavirus? What is the 2019-nCoV virus?

- A novel coronavirus (CoV) is a new strain of coronavirus that has not been previously identified in humans.
- The novel coronavirus is closely related to SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) coronavirus and in the same family as MERS (Middle East respiratory syndrome) coronavirus.

How is the novel coronavirus spread? Can I catch it?

- Coronavirus experts think that it's likely that the novel coronavirus originated in an animal species, and then spread to humans.
- Person to person spread of the novel coronavirus is reported as occurring, but it is not yet understood how easily this happens.
- Other human coronavirus strains are spread from person to person through contaminated droplets from a person who is sick with the illness (through coughing or sneezing) or contaminated hands.

Is the virus being transmitted from one person to another?

- The novel coronavirus (n-CoV) can be spread from person to person most likely by coughing or contact with respiratory secretions.

What are the symptoms?

- The most common symptom is a fever. Other symptoms include, cough, sore throat and shortness of breath.
- In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia with severe acute respiratory distress.

How long do symptoms take to present?

- It is unknown at this stage but most likely between two and 14 days.

I have symptoms. What should I do?

- If you have travelled to Wuhan in the past 14 days and have a fever and respiratory signs and symptoms, please call ahead and book in to see a doctor. Tell your doctor when you call that you have been in Wuhan.
- Practice good hygiene by covering your coughs and sneezes and wash your hands thoroughly, for at least 20 seconds with soap and water.

What should I do if I come into contact with a person with symptoms, or who I think has returned to Australia recently from Wuhan?

- Monitor your health.
- If you develop symptoms including a fever and respiratory signs, please call ahead to talk to a doctor. Tell your doctor that you have been in contact with someone from Wuhan. The doctor may tell you to attend your nearest emergency department, if so call ahead before attending.
- Practice simple hygiene by covering your coughs and sneezes and wash your hands thoroughly.

Are any groups of people particularly at risk?

- It's likely that people with underlying medical conditions such as heart or lung disease and the elderly will be at risk of more severe disease if infected with the novel coronavirus.

How can I protect myself / my family?

- Practice simple hygiene by covering your coughs and sneezes and wash your hands thoroughly.
- Avoid close contact, when possible, with anyone showing symptoms of respiratory illness such as coughing and sneezing.

Do face masks protect against the virus? Which face masks?

- P2 masks are likely to provide some protection against the virus, but these must be fitted and worn properly.
- P2 masks are not recommended for this purpose outside the health care setting. People who think that they might be infected with novel coronavirus should wear a surgical mask (or P2 mask) in order to reduce the risk of transmitting the virus to anyone else.

Is there a cure or vaccine?

- Currently there are no available vaccines that protect against coronaviruses.
- There is no specific treatment. Most of the time, symptoms will go away on their own. People who have serious disease with complications can be cared for in hospital.

Has my doctor been informed?

- Health workers in NSW public hospital emergency departments as well as community-based general practitioners have already been issued advice on symptoms and actions to prevent the spread of the coronavirus through careful infection control measures.

Are people in NSW at risk?

- As of 6pm 26 January 2020, there are three confirmed cases for 2019-nCoV in NSW and one case under investigation.
- NSW Health has developed and exercised a range of procedures for case finding, diagnosis, and contact tracing for high consequence infectious diseases (such as pandemic influenza, SARS, MERS, and emerging infections) should they occur in NSW.

I have a holiday / work trip. Should I cancel my trip?

- If you are heading overseas to destinations which may have been affected, check the advice on [Smart Traveller](#).

Where can I find more information?

- Visit the NSW Health website - [Infectious disease alerts](#)
- Visit the [World Health Organization](#)

Children returning to school or child care

What if my child is unwell?

- Any child who is unwell should not attend childcare or school. Seek medical attention as soon as possible.

What if my child was in contact with someone who has the coronavirus?

- Any child, who has been in contact with a person confirmed as having novel coronavirus, should not attend school or childcare during the 14 days after last close contact with that person. Contact the local Public Health Unit on 1300 066 055 for advice.
- Close contact is defined as 15 minutes face-to-face contact with a person with confirmed coronavirus in any setting, or sharing a closed space with a person with confirmed coronavirus for more than 2 hours.

What if my child is returning to school after visiting Wuhan within the last 14 days?

- School students (including boarding school students) returning from Wuhan who are well, and have **not** been in contact with a person with confirmed coronavirus, can continue to attend school provided that they follow the advice below.
- If they develop a fever, a cough, sore throat or shortness of breath, within 14 days of returning the student should be immediately isolated from other people.
- If the student is a boarder, the school should give the child a surgical mask if available and take the child to their usual GP or emergency department for assessment, and phone ahead so that ideally they can speak to the doctor so that the practice can make appropriate preparations to protect others.
- If the student is not a boarder, the parents should be asked to give the child a surgical mask if available and take the child to their usual GP or emergency department as soon as possible, but to phone ahead so that ideally they can speak to the doctor and the practice can make appropriate preparations to protect others.
- The doctor can assess the situation and may recommend the student attend a nearby emergency department. If so call ahead before attending the emergency department.
- In all cases the school should contact the local Public Health Unit on 1300 066 055 and provide details so that the Public Health Unit can follow up as necessary.



Health

新型冠状病毒问答

什么是冠状病毒？

- 冠状病毒是一大类病毒，已知会引起普通感冒以至更严重的疾病，例如中东呼吸综合症（MERS）和非典（又称严重急性呼吸系统综合症，即 SARS）。
- 冠状病毒在全世界的人类和动物中都有发现。

什么是新型冠状病毒？什么是 2019 年新型冠状病毒？

- 新型冠状病毒（CoV）是一种新型冠状病毒，以前在人类中尚未发现。
- 截至 2020 年 1 月 21 日，已发现 200 例确诊的新型冠状病毒（2019-nCoV）病例，这些病例在 2019 年 12 月最先起源于中国湖北省武汉市。
- 新型冠状病毒与非典冠状病毒密切相关，并且与中东呼吸综合征（MERS）冠状病毒属于同一家族。
- 截至 2020 年 1 月 21 日，至少有四人死亡。
- 在深圳和北京（中国）、日本、泰国和韩国也发现了其他病例。据报告，这些人多数都曾去过武汉。

新型冠状病毒如何传播？我会被传染吗？

- 冠状病毒专家认为，新型冠状病毒很可能起源于动物物种，然后传播到人类。
- 据报道，这种新型冠状病毒已在人与人之间传播，但目前尚不知道这种病毒传播有多容易。
- 其他种类的人类冠状病毒由患者（咳嗽或打喷嚏时）受污染的飞沫或者受污染的手在人与人之间传播。

病毒是从一个人传播到另一个人吗？

- 中国卫生官员已确认新型冠状病毒（2019-nCoV）的传播是通过人际传播。

有什么症状？

- 最常见的症状是发烧。其他症状包括咳嗽、喉咙痛和呼吸急促。
- 在更严重的情况下，感染可导致严重的急性呼吸窘迫引起的肺炎。截至 2020 年 1 月 21 日，至少有四人死于感染。

多久出现症状？

- 目前尚不清楚，但最有可能在 2 至 14 天之后。

我有症状，该怎么办？

- 如果你过去 14 天内去过武汉市，并且发烧并出现呼吸道体征和症状，请提前打电话预约就医。打电话时请告诉医生你去过武汉。
- 养成简单的卫生习惯，咳嗽和打喷嚏时遮口并洗净双手。

如果我遇到有症状的人或者我认为最近从武汉回到澳大利亚的人，该怎么办？

- 密切注意你的健康情况。
- 如果你出现发烧和呼吸道症状等症状，请提前打电话预约就医。告诉你的医生，你遇见过来自武汉的人。
- 养成简单的卫生习惯，咳嗽和打喷嚏时遮口并洗净双手。

哪些人风险特别高？

- 本身已患病（例如心脏病或肺病）的人，一旦感染了新型冠状病毒，那么久可能面临患上更严重疾病的风险。

我如何保护自己及家人？

- 养成简单的卫生习惯，咳嗽和打喷嚏时遮口并洗净双手。
- 如有可能，避免与任何表现出咳嗽和打喷嚏等呼吸道疾病症状的人密切接触。

口罩可以预防病毒吗？哪些口罩？

- P2 口罩可能对病毒有一定预防作用，但是口罩本身以及戴口罩的方式都必须合适。
- 在医疗机构外面不建议使用 P2 口罩。
- 认为自己可能感染了新型冠状病毒的人应该戴外科口罩（或 P2 口罩），以减少将病毒传播给其他人的可能性。

有没有相应的治疗方法或疫苗？

- 目前没有预防冠状病毒的疫苗。
- 没有特别的治疗方法。在大多数情况下，症状会自行消失。有严重疾病并伴有并发症的人可以在医院护理。

我的医生是否已经获得有关信息？

- 新州公立医院急诊部的医疗人员以及社区的全科医生都已收到有关冠状病毒症状及预防措施的建议，通过谨慎的感染控制措施来预防冠状病毒传播。

新州的人有没有风险？

- 在州迄今未发现冠状病毒病例。
- 澳大利亚人的风险很低。
- 新州卫生部已经制定并实施了一系列程序来发现、诊断在新州发生的后果严重的传染病（例如大流行性流感、非典、中东呼吸综合征和新发感染）病例并追踪接触者。

我在国外度假或工作，应该取消旅行吗？

- 如果你要前往海外可能受到影响的目的地，请在这个网站查看关于《明智的旅客》的建议：smartraveller.gov.au

新州政府正在采取哪些措施来保护人民健康？

- 对抵达悉尼的旅客中伴有发烧的呼吸道疾病患者，新州政府提供最新的健康信息和建议。
- 在悉尼机场，联邦的生物安全工作人员正在等候从中国受冠状病毒感染影响的地区回来的旅客。新州卫生部将为他们提供协助。对身体不适的人，将进行冠状病毒感染评估，并进行适当的检查。
- 新州政府将继续与澳大利亚政府，澳大利亚其他司法管辖区以及国际上的公共卫生官员合作，以监测情况。
- 韦斯特米德临床病理和医学研究所（ICPMR）实验室已开发出可以检测冠状病毒的病理学检测方法。

还有其他冠状病毒吗？

- 中东呼吸综合症（MERS）和严重急性呼吸综合症（SARS）。

在哪里可以找到更多信息？

- 访问新州卫生部网站：<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/alerts/Pages/default.aspx>
- 访问世界卫生组织的网站：<https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus>