

# *epi*TRENDS

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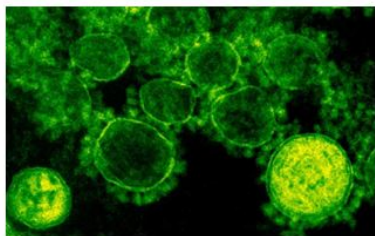
## 2019 Novel Coronavirus

A new coronavirus has spread globally, causing cases in over 24 countries. As the outbreak continues, information is changing rapidly. As an emerging condition, public health recommendations for this agent are likely to change. This issue will give a general

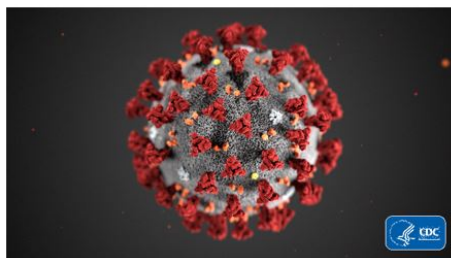
overview of the 2019 novel coronavirus situation and response. Please check the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) [coronavirus page](#) for the most up-to-date information and guidance.

### Background

Named from their crown-like appearance, coronaviruses form a large family of viruses that produce a range of symptoms in their hosts. Four common coronaviruses cause cold symptoms in humans. Other coronaviruses infect animals, such as bats, camels, cattle, and cats. When these strains jump to humans and can be spread person to person, widespread outbreaks are possible.



MERS-CoV  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



COVID-19 (2019 Novel Coronavirus)

Two additional coronaviruses were known to cause human illness. An outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) during 2002-2003 was initially associated with a live animal market in China. There were 8,437 cases and 813 deaths reported from 30 countries. An outbreak connected to a hospital in Toronto in 2003 resulted in 375 cases and 44 deaths. Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS) was identified in 2012 in Saudi Arabia with continued cases, reaching around 2,500 total. An outbreak of MERS associated with multiple healthcare facilities in Korea involved 186 cases and 36 deaths,



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In December, 2019, an outbreak of COVID-19 (representing coronavirus disease of 2019) caused by a novel virus SARS-CoV-2 (previously called 2019-nCoV) was identified in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China. Several other countries in Asia soon reported cases. The first COVID-19 case in the United States was confirmed January 20, 2020, in a traveler returning from China.

On January 30, 2020 World Health Organization determined the COVID-19 outbreak met the criteria for a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. By mid-February, China had reported almost 50,000 laboratory-confirmed cases and almost 1400 deaths. Cases were reported from multiple countries in Asia and Europe and in Australia as well as Toronto and Vancouver in Canada. In this country, at least six states have laboratory-confirmed cases.

Based on related coronaviruses, SARS-CoV-2 is probably spread by droplets like other respiratory viruses. People who touch contaminated surfaces and then their eyes or nose may auto-inoculate. Transmission has been reported within families, including from persons with mild symptoms, and within healthcare settings. There has been transmission on a cruise ship, suggesting other types of close living quarters may present a risk. In the United States, transmission from one person another has been documented only in household settings. Standard hygiene measures should be encouraged, such as covering coughs and sneezes, and frequent hand washing.



***Public Health Response***

With the goal of COVID-19 containment, multiple countries have established constraints on travel from China. Airport screening was instituted in the United States along with restrictions on entry for those arriving from China. Health screening with subsequent monitoring of asymptomatic travelers became effective on February 2, 2020 and at present is still in place. Seattle-Tacoma International Airport is among the airports with Division of Global Migration and Quarantine stations, and has been receiving and screening passengers.

Depending on risk exposures, arriving travelers may be assigned to active or self-monitoring, and advised to promptly identify symptoms that need evaluation. Testing decisions will be based on symptoms and identified exposures. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has been the only source of testing. This capacity may be extended to reference laboratories such as the Washington State Public Health Laboratories.

It is important to detect and prevent severe respiratory infections such as coronavirus as well as influenza. This means following respiratory hygiene practices, such as staying home with respiratory symptoms and covering coughs and sneezes and notifying a healthcare facility of respiratory symptoms before arrival. Healthcare facilities can put signage and masks at public entries for use by patients. When indicated, healthcare personnel should use personal protective equipment. Annual influenza vaccination is recommended, particularly healthcare staff and those at risk for severe disease.

## Current Guidance



It is likely that the public health response to COVID-19 will last several months, and will be fluid as additional information is available. Local health jurisdiction staff have been prominent in the response, interviewing possible cases, tracking contacts of a case, and monitoring incoming travelers. DOH has the following online resources available for local health jurisdictions, which are updated frequently (<https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus>):

- [Quick sheet](#): COVID-19 guideline face sheet
- [Risk assessment](#) (link to CDC): risk assessment for potential exposures and public health management
- [LHJ monitoring guidance](#): local health jurisdiction guidance for conducting contact or traveler monitoring
- [Active monitoring](#): information for a person under active monitoring
- [Self-monitoring](#): information for a person under self-monitoring
- [Self-monitoring form](#): self-monitoring form to log symptoms
- [Notice informing providers of a contact presenting for care](#): gives a healthcare provider infection prevention instructions for evaluating a symptomatic person who may have COVID-19
- [Interim clinical guidance](#) (link to CDC): includes clinical and infection control links
- [Persons evaluated for COVID-19](#) (link to CDC): MMWR reviews clinical characteristics of persons evaluated for COVID-19

Additional DOH resources include:

- [Federal Quarantine Guidance](#): explanation of traveler quarantine
- [Specimen collection and submission](#): links to Microbiology Test Menu for specimens, containers, and shipping
- [Pre-hospital infection control](#) and [Hospital preparedness checklist](#)
- [School resources](#): for school nurses and administrators
- [Workplace recommendations](#): workplace recommendations including airline crew

National and international information:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- World Health Organization: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>