



Memorandum	
To	All Ontario Region Nursing Stations, Health Centres, and Health Centres with Treatment
From	Maurica Maher, MD MSc, FRCPC Regional Public Health Physician Shari Glenn, NP (PHC) Director of Primary Health Care First Nations and Inuit Health Branch: Ontario Region, ISC
Date	23 JAN 2020
Regarding	Novel Coronavirus Infection

Purpose: To provide currently available information about a newly-identified coronavirus in China.

On December 31, 2019, the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission in Hubei province, Central China, issued a public statement that they had identified an outbreak of pneumonia of unknown cause. China has made a determination that a novel coronavirus (referred to as 2019-nCoV) is responsible for cases of pneumonia in the Wuhan outbreak. The Public Health Agency of Canada is actively monitoring the situation regarding a novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) identified in patients with pneumonia in Wuhan, China, as well as imported cases in other countries. The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) is in close contact with the World Health Organization to assess the situation and any potential risk to Canadians. At this time there is no clear evidence that this virus is spread easily from person-to-person, although person-to-person transmission has occurred.

The Public Health Agency of Canada is putting in place measures to enhance identification of possibly infected people over the coming week. These include messaging on arrival screens at Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver international airports reminding travellers to inform a Border Services Officer if they are experiencing flu-like symptoms, and an additional health screening question will be added to electronic kiosks.

The overall risk of disease spread to Canada and First Nations communities is considered low at this time, and there have been no cases in Canada.

This is an evolving situation and updates will be provided as more information is learned about the illness. Public Health Ontario and PHAC are updating information regularly.



What are the symptoms of a coronavirus infection?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that originate in animals but are known to cause respiratory illness in humans, particularly during the fall and winter months. Other novel coronaviruses have included Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV).

Coronavirus infections are common and typically lead to the common cold. Gastrointestinal disease is possible for young infants. Coronavirus symptoms are usually mild to moderate and can include:

- Headache
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Fever
- Feeling generally unwell

Although rare, coronavirus can also cause serious illness such as pneumonia, respiratory failure, kidney failure, or even death.

Role of the CHN:

- Clients presenting with (a) fever and acute respiratory illness or pneumonia AND (b) travel to Wuhan, China, within 14 days prior to onset of symptoms should be clinically assessed and reported to the CD nurse immediately.
- After hours, the CHN should contact the EPHO on call (1-855-407-2676) to access the medical officer on call.
- Symptomatic clients who had contact with individuals meeting the above criteria should also be assessed.
- Clinicians should continue routine infection prevention and control practices, and apply additional respiratory precautions, based on risk assessment when caring for clients.
- Clinicians should encourage all clients to practice good hand hygiene and other practices such as staying home when ill to prevent the spread of respiratory infections. Influenza is still circulating in Ontario and Canada.

Resources:

Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV). Public Health Ontario. <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/diseases-and-conditions/infectious-diseases/respiratory-diseases/novel-coronavirus>

Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) Testing. Public Health Ontario. <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/laboratory-services/test-information-index/wuhan-novel-coronavirus>

Public Health Agency of Canada Novel Coronavirus Update: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html>

Public Health Agency of Canada Novel Coronavirus Symptoms <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus.html>