

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Public Health - Factsheet

In December 2019, a novel (new) coronavirus (COVID-19) was confirmed in Wuhan, China. The situation continues to evolve, with COVID-19 cases reported in countries outside of China, including Canada and the United States. The risk of COVID-19 to Canadians is low at this time.

As the situation continues to evolve, the most current information, including details of 'affected areas', can be found on the Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living (MHSAL) coronavirus website at www.manitoba.ca/health/coronavirus/index.html

What is the novel coronavirus (COVID-19)?

Coronaviruses can cause illness in humans and in animals. Sometimes an animal coronavirus can cause illness in a human. Common coronaviruses that infect humans usually cause mild symptoms similar to the common cold. COVID-19 is a new strain of the virus that has not been previously identified in humans.

What are the symptoms of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19)?

Symptoms range from mild (fever, cough, runny nose, sore throat) to severe (shortness of breath and breathing difficulties). Older people and those living with chronic health conditions appear to be more vulnerable to becoming severely ill.

How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus is spread through close contact (within 2 meters/ 6 feet) with an infected person who is coughing or sneezing. You can also get COVID-19 by touching objects contaminated with the virus and then touching your mouth, eyes or nose.

How can I reduce my risk of infection?

People are encouraged to take common prevention measures, including regular hand washing with soap and water for at least 15 seconds. Make sure to dry your hands thoroughly. Or, you can use an alcohol-based hand cleanser if your hands are not visibly dirty. It is especially important to clean your hands:

- after coughing or sneezing
- when caring for a sick person
- before, during or after you prepare food

- before eating
- after toilet use
- when hands are visibly dirty

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing and sneezing, or you can cough or sneeze into your sleeve. Throw used tissues in the garbage and immediately wash your hands. Avoid sharing household and personal care items (i.e., dishes, towels, pillows, toothbrushes, etc.). After use of these items, wash them thoroughly with soap and warm water, place in the dishwasher for cleaning or, wash in your washing machine.

Is there a vaccine for COVID-19?

At this time, there is no vaccine to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

There are no specific treatments for coronavirus illnesses. Most people with COVID-19 will get better on their own. Some individuals, however, may require medical treatment.

Should I wear a mask to protect myself?

It is not clear there is any significant benefit to wearing masks to prevent influenza or influenza-like-illnesses (including COVID-19) in community settings.

Where should I go if I think I have COVID-19?

If you are ill and have recently traveled to an affected area, or if you are ill and have been in close contact (within 2 meters/ 6ft) with an ill person connected to the current outbreak, you should call Health Links-Info Santé, who will provide advice on where to go to be assessed.

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Individuals may be asked to self-monitor themselves for symptoms if they have recently returned from an affected area, or have been in close contact with someone who may have COVID-19. Individuals asked to self-monitor are not sick. However, if they develop symptoms such as a fever, cough, shortness of breath, breathing difficulties or any other symptoms, they should self-isolate (i.e., limit contact with other people) and call Health Links–Info Santé, or 911 if it is an emergency.

How do I self-monitor my symptoms?

To self-monitor your symptoms, you should take your temperature twice a day, in the morning and at nighttime, using a digital thermometer by mouth (oral). Do not eat, drink, smoke and/or chew gum 30 minutes before taking your temperature. Do not take acetaminophen (e.g. Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (e.g. Advil®) during the 14-day self-monitoring period UNLESS your health care provider advises otherwise. A **Temperature Self-Monitoring Form** is available on the Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living coronavirus website (www.manitoba.ca/health/coronavirus/providers.html).

What do I do if I start having symptoms?

If you develop a fever higher than 38.0°C (100.4°F), cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, or any other symptoms at any time during the 14-day self-monitoring period, call Health Links–Info Santé before going to your local urgent care centre or emergency department, or call 911 if it is an emergency. Be sure to advise health officials as to your travel and/ or exposure history.

For more information about COVID-19:

Call Health Links–Info Santé in Winnipeg at 204-788-8200; toll free elsewhere in Manitoba 1-888-315-9257;

Or, visit:

Manitoba's coronavirus website:

www.manitoba.ca/health/coronavirus/index.html

Canada's coronavirus website:

www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html