

For Immediate Release



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Coronavirus Disease 2019

East Hartford, CT – The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is responding to an outbreak of respiratory disease caused by a novel (new) coronavirus that was first detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China, which has now been detected in 37 locations internationally, including cases in the United States. The virus has been named “SARS-CoV-2” and the disease it causes has been named “coronavirus disease 2019” (abbreviated “COVID-19”).

COVID-19 is an emerging disease and there is more to learn about its transmissibility, severity, and other features and what will happen in the United States.

Outbreaks of novel virus infections among people are always of public health concern. The risk from these outbreaks depends on characteristics of the virus, including how well it spreads between people, the severity of resulting illness, and the medical or other measures available to control the impact of the virus (for example, vaccine or treatment medications). The fact that this disease has caused illness, including illness resulting in death, and sustained person-to-person spread is concerning. These factors meet two of the criteria of a pandemic. As community spread is detected in more and more countries, the world moves closer toward meeting the third criteria, worldwide spread of the new virus.

Still, individual risk is dependent on exposure. For the general American public, *who are unlikely to be exposed to this virus at this time*, the immediate health risk from COVID-19 is considered **low**. At this time, this virus is NOT currently spreading in the community in the United States. The Town of East Hartford, the Department of Health, and Social Services are actively monitoring COVID-19 developments and will continue current containment measures while also planning to mitigate the disease, per CDC and Department of Public Health (DPH) protocols

Learn more about the CDC's [response and recommendations](#). The East Hartford Health Department will continue to provide updates to our website as new information becomes available.

How COVID-19 Spreads

Current understanding about how the virus that causes coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) spreads is largely based on what is known about similar coronaviruses.

Person-to-person spread

The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet)
- Via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
- These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

Spread from contact with infected surfaces or objects

It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

When does spread happen?

- People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (the sickest).
- Some spread might be possible before people show symptoms; there have been reports of this with this new coronavirus, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

How efficiently does the virus spread?

How easily a virus spreads from person-to-person can vary. Some viruses are highly contagious (like measles), while other viruses are less so. Another factor is whether the spread continues over multiple generations of people (if spread is sustained). The virus that causes COVID-19 seems to be spreading easily and sustainably in Hubei Province and other parts of China. In the United States, spread from person-to-person has occurred *only among a few close contacts and has not spread any further to date.*

Symptoms of COVID-19

For confirmed coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases, reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death. CDC believes at this time that symptoms of COVID-19 may appear in as few as 2 days or as long as 14 days after exposure. This is based on what has been seen previously as the incubation period of MERS-CoV viruses. People who think they may have been exposed to COVID-19 should contact their healthcare provider immediately. Symptoms can include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Learn more about testing for COVID-19

Prevention and Treatment

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19 and there is no specific antiviral treatment recommended. People with COVID-19 should receive supportive care to help relieve symptoms. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. However, as a reminder, the East Hartford Health Department and the CDC always recommend everyday personal protective measures to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
 - If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol
 - Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Stay home when you are sick
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe
- Follow CDC's recommendations for using a facemask:
 - CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19
 - Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others
 - The use of facemasks is also crucial for health workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a health care facility)

For more information regarding COVID-19, review the CDC's resources including:

- Latest Updates
- Information for Healthcare Professionals
- Information for Travel
- Information for Businesses and Employers

As well as the CT Department of Public Health website for information including:

- DPH State Updates/Alerts
- Healthcare Practitioner Resources

- School Resources
- Behavioral Health Resources
- Media News/Releases