

# New coronavirus: What you need to know

24 January 2020, by Sara Laux

## Novel Coronavirus preventive measures

### DO



Wash hands frequently



Maintain good personal hygiene



Ensure food, including eggs, is thoroughly cooked

### AVOID



AVOID close contact with sick people



AVOID touching your face



AVOID direct contact with animals (live or dead) and their environment

AVOID touching surfaces that may be contaminated with droppings

### DO NOT travel if you are sick



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## What is the coronavirus?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that can cause diseases like the common cold and pneumonia. They typically affect the [upper respiratory tract](#) and can range in severity from mild to severe.

Risk of severe disease may be higher in people with weakened immune systems, such as [older adults](#) and people with chronic disease.

The symptoms of this new virus, originally identified in Wuhan, China, include:

- fever
- cough
- difficulty breathing

Other common symptoms of coronavirus can include:

- runny nose
- headache
- sore throat
- a general feeling of being unwell

The Public Health Agency of Canada is monitoring this rapidly evolving situation. [More information on the coronavirus is available on their site.](#)

## What to do if you feel sick

As with any virus, here's what to do if you feel ill:

- Stay home and do your best to avoid close contact with others
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands. If you don't have a tissue, sneeze or cough into your elbow.
- Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces

## Help prevent the spread of illness

A new flu-like strain of the coronavirus has been reported in China, South Korea, Taiwan, Japan, Thailand and the US.

Currently, there are no reported cases in Canada, although several people are being monitored for signs they may have contracted the [virus](#).

McMaster's Environmental & Occupational Health Support Services is continuing to monitor the situation and will follow any recommendations made by Canadian public health agencies.

- Wash your hands often. Wash for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer only if water is not available
- Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick

If you are traveling it is important to check with [the Global Affairs Canada site](#) for any [travel advisories](#).

Provided by McMaster University

APA citation: New coronavirus: What you need to know (2020, January 24) retrieved 10 June 2022 from [https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-01-coronavirus\\_1\\_2.html](https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-01-coronavirus_1_2.html)

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