

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

What you need to know

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases like Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is a new strain of coronavirus that hasn't previously been identified in humans. It emerged out of Wuhan city, Hubei Province, China, in late 2019.

What we know so far

There are currently no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in New Zealand but the likelihood of a case coming into New Zealand is high. The likelihood of an outbreak in New Zealand is low and the Ministry of Health is monitoring the situation closely.

For the latest number of cases in China and other countries, visit the World Health Organization's (WHO's) [Novel Coronavirus webpage](#) and click on [Situation Reports](#). Or view, [WHO's map showing countries with confirmed cases](#). [WHO's Novel Coronavirus webpage can also be viewed in Chinese](#).

Q&As

What are the symptoms of 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19)?

The symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to a range of other respiratory illnesses, such as influenza ('flu'). They include fever, cough and difficulty breathing. Difficulty breathing is a sign of possible pneumonia and requires immediate medical attention.

What is the treatment for the 2019 novel coronavirus?

There is no specific treatment for the disease caused by COVID-19. However, many of the symptoms can be treated based on the person's clinical condition (breathing support for people with breathing difficulties, for example). As this is a new virus, there is currently no vaccine available.

Who is more likely to get the coronavirus?

People of all ages are being infected, but older people and those with medical conditions seem most likely to get seriously ill.

What should I do if I'm feeling unwell?

If you are feeling unwell with **minor symptoms**, call your local doctor or call the dedicated coronavirus line:

0800 358 5453 (or **+64 9 358 5453** for international SIMS) for advice. Interpreters are available.

If you are feeling unwell with **severe symptoms**, such as difficulty breathing, seek medical attention urgently. Call ahead and mention your travel history.

What can you do to protect yourself, your family and the community?

We can all play a part in helping keep ourselves and others well. The most important action is to practice good respiratory (cough, sneeze) and hand hygiene.

Novel coronavirus: Protect yourself



Cover coughs and sneezes

Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or clothing, throw the tissue in the bin and wash hands afterwards (wash your hands after wiping children's noses too).



Wash your hands regularly

Wash your hands regularly with soap and water, or use hand sanitiser. This is particularly important before eating or preparing food and after using the toilet. Good hand hygiene is more important and effective than wearing a mask.



Use tissues when spitting

If you need to spit, spit into a tissue, throw it in the bin and wash your hands afterwards.



Don't share food utensils

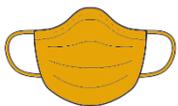
If you are sharing food, do not use your own spoon, fork, or chopsticks to pick food from the sharing plates – this can spread illness through saliva.



Celebrations, events and crowded places

The Ministry of Health does not currently propose altering arrangements for public events. But it's important that you:

- Do not attend events if you are unwell
- Do not attend events if you have been in, or transited through, mainland China in the past 14 days (see self-isolation information below)
- Practice good cough, sneeze and hand hygiene – before and after eating and after using the toilet.
- Avoid close contact (within a metre for 15 minutes or more) with people in crowded places, especially those showing signs of illness.



Masks

Only wear a mask if you have respiratory symptoms such as a cough or runny nose, or if you are caring for someone with these symptoms. You don't need to wear a mask if you are well. Good cough, sneeze and hand hygiene provides greater protection. Information about the effectiveness of masks and how to wear, remove and dispose of them, is available on the [World Health Organization website](#) (under 'Protect yourself').



Self-isolate

If you have been in, or transited through, mainland China since 2 February 2020, you may have been exposed to, and infected with novel coronavirus (COVID-19). You should:

- [Isolate yourself](#) from other people for 14 days from the time you left or transited through mainland China (this is because it can take 14 days to start showing signs of the illness), **and**
- Register your details with Healthline within 24 hours of your arrival in New Zealand. Call **0800 358 5453** to do this. (The number is **+64 9 358 5453** if you are using an international SIM.)

[Self-isolation](#) means avoiding any situation where you may come in close contact with others (face to face contact closer than 1 metre for more than 15 minutes). Find out more on the [Ministry of Health's novel coronavirus webpage](#), or call the number above.



Be socially responsible

Show respect and kindness to others during this challenging global situation



Travelling overseas?

Check the New Zealand government's safetravel.govt.nz website for the latest travel advisories before you go. Currently, the advice is that New Zealanders do not travel to China due to the novel coronavirus outbreak.

For more information:

[New Zealand Ministry of Health](#)

[World Health Organisation](#) (English)

[World Health Organization](#) (Chinese)

[Auckland Regional Public Health Service](#)

