


UNDERSTANDING INFECTIOUS DISEASE

NOTE: COVID-19 IS A NEW VIRUS AND MORE STUDIES ARE NEEDED



New Jersey Work Environment Council
(WEC)



What is an infectious disease?

- ▶ What is an infectious disease?

Its an illness caused by microorganisms, such as bacteria, viruses, fungi, or parasites.

- ▶ What are some examples of infectious diseases?

Coronavirus


Common cold

Influenza (flu)

Stomach virus

Cellulitis

Bloodborne Pathogens



What is (novel) coronavirus?

- Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses; some cause illness in people, others only in animals; some animal coronaviruses can infect people.
- Some coronaviruses cause common colds, but are not significant threats for most healthy people.
- Other coronaviruses have caused Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS)
- **Novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is a new disease caused by a coronavirus that has not been previously seen in humans.**
- It was first detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China. First linked to a live animal market, the virus is now spreading from person-to-person.



COVID-19 transmission

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).

Through 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.

Contaminated surfaces:

Covid-19 - lives longest on plastic and steel, surviving for up to 72 hours. But the amount of detectable in aerosols for up to three hours, up to four hours on copper, up to 24 hours on cardboard and up to two to three days on plastic and stainless steel



Symptoms


- Symptoms can include:
 - Fever
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath
- Symptoms begin 2-14 days after exposure.
- Severity can be anywhere from mild respiratory illness to severe pneumonia-like illness (Novel Coronavirus-Infected Pneumonia or NCIP) and death.



Emergency warning signs for COVID-19 get medical attention immediately.


Emergency warning signs include:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face
- *This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning.



Protections against coronavirus & infectious disease exposure in general

- ▶ Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- ▶ 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 touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
- ▶ Avoid contact with people who are sick
- ▶ Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. (Throw used tissues in a lined trash can.)
- ▶ Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces (using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe).



What if I've had contact with someone who has covid-19?

- ▶ Stay home except to receive medical care.
- ▶ Separate yourself from other people & animals in your home. Although there have not been reports of pets or other animals becoming sick with COVID-19, it is still recommended that people sick with COVID-19 limit contact with animals until more information is known about the virus.
- ▶ Call ahead before visiting your doctor.
- ▶ Wear a facemask when around other people.
- ▶ Cover coughs and sneezes
- ▶ WASH YOUR HANDS OFTEN
- ▶ Avoid sharing household items
- ▶ Clean all "high touch" surfaces every day
- ▶ Monitor your symptoms



Help Protect Healthcare Workers

A Healthcare Workers' Perspective

Union Coalition – HPAAE, 1199SEIU, 1199J/1199C-AFSCME, JNESO, NJNU, United Steelworkers, NYSNA, UFCW


Serious Issues facing to healthcare workers:

- ▶ Shortage of PPE – masks, gloves, gowns
 - ▶ Hospitals rationing masks, difficult to access
 - ▶ Mandating re-use of masks with procedures not consistent with CDC guidelines
 - ▶ Inconsistent adherence to CDC regulations regarding negative pressure rooms



A Healthcare Workers' Perspective (cont.)

- ▶ Lack of Testing –
 - ▶ Increases exposure Risks to patients and staff
 - ▶ Staff under quarantine – need to be tested sooner
 - ▶ Patients who are rule out – need to be tested sooner
- ▶ Ongoing Training on OSHA guidelines (constantly evolving)
 - ▶ Has been inconsistent among facilities, one believing that training given for Ebola six years ago is adequate
- ▶ Facility Preparedness Response Plans
 - ▶ Have not been made available, should be consistent in all aspects including cohorting, visiting hours, etc.
- ▶ Quarantined HC workers – Worker Shortage, early testing may reduce
- ▶ Workers Exhaustion – Relaxed rules on MOT, Staffing, Sick Days



Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

For up to date information go to CDC Coronavirus (COVID-19) website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>