

Communicating Information About 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) to the Missouri Western State University Campus Community

What is novel coronavirus (COVID-19)?

COVID-19 is a newly identified coronavirus that is causing an outbreak of pneumonia illness. It was first identified in December 2019 in the city of Wuhan, Hubei Province, China.

Since then, the virus has been identified in multiple other countries, including cases in the U.S.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), [human coronaviruses](#) are common throughout the world and usually cause mild to moderate illness in people. This new virus is a public health concern because:

- It is newly identified, so much is still unknown about it.
- Two other human coronaviruses, MERS-CoV and SARS-CoV, have caused severe illness.

What is the risk?

The CDC considers this new virus a public health concern based on current information. However, the immediate health risk to the general US public is considered low at this time. The CDC and the World Health Organization are closely monitoring the situation and providing ongoing guidance.

Symptoms and transmission:

[Symptoms](#) may be flu-like, ranging from mild to serious, and include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing.

Person-to-person spread is occurring, although it's unclear exactly how it is transmitted and how easily the virus spreads between people.

Novel Coronavirus in China:

The CDC recommends [avoiding non-essential travel to the People's Republic of China](#) (this does not include Hong Kong, Macau, or the island of Taiwan). If you must travel:

- Avoid contact with sick people.

- Avoid animals (alive or dead), animal markets, and products that come from animals (such as uncooked meat).
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Older adults and travelers with underlying health issues may be at risk for more severe disease and should discuss travel to China, Iran, Italy, Japan or South Korea with their health care provider.

MWSU recommends following the CDC guidelines for travel.

Treatment:

People infected with COVID-19 should receive supportive care to help relieve symptoms. Currently, there is no specific antiviral treatment recommended for COVID-19 infection. (source: [CDC](#))

Prevention:

There is no vaccine to prevent this virus, and the [CDC](#) advises that the best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus.

Currently, COVID-19 has not been found to be spreading in the U.S., so there are no additional precautions recommended for the general public to take.

Here are everyday actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- 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.

Recommendations for people with respiratory symptoms:

If you have symptoms of fever, cough, and/or difficulty breathing and in the last 14 days you:

- Traveled to China, Iran, Italy, Japan, South Korea, or
- Visited an affected region, or
- Had close contact with someone who had traveled to an affected region in China, Iran, Italy, Japan or South Korea and had respiratory symptoms.

You should:

- Seek medical care right away. Before you go to a doctor's office or emergency room, call ahead and tell them about your recent travel and your symptoms.
- MWSU students and other MWSU faculty/staff may call Esry Student Health Center at 816-271-4495. Monday-Friday 8:00am to 4:30pm and Mosaic Nursing Triage Line at 816-271-4000 24 hours a day.
- All non-campus community may contact their health care provider or call The City of St. Joseph Health Department at 816-271-4636.
- Avoid contact with others.
- Do not travel while sick. Please do not get on public transportation or just arrive at the campus health center. Call for direction and advice instead: Esry Student Health Center – 816-271-4495.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

What is the campus health center doing about COVID-19?

- Utilizing the 2019 Novel Coronavirus screening guidelines provided by Mosaic Life Care.
- Provide personal protective equipment for patients (Surgical Masks, Hand sanitizers, gloves).
- Ongoing communication with Mosaic Life Care and The St. Joseph Health Department.
- Education and Health Services Support.

For additional information and updates you may go to the following website:

<https://health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/communicable/novel-coronavirus/>