Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) and You

What is 2019 novel coronavirus?

The 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) is a new virus that causes respiratory illness in people and can spread from person to person. This virus was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China.

Can people outside China get 2019-nCoV?

This 2019-nCoV virus does seem to be able to spread from person to person, but it's not clear how easily this happens. Although cases have been detected globally, and some person-to-person spread has been detected, the likelihood of someone catching this virus is very low in most of the world. Right now, the greatest risk of infection is for people in Wuhan or people who have travelled to Wuhan and less so, other parts of China. Global health organisations continue to closely monitor the situation.

How does 2019-nCoV spread?

The exact way the virus is spread is not fully known. With similar coronaviruses (MERS and SARS), person-to-person spread is thought to have happened mainly via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes, similar to how influenza and other viruses that cause respiratory illness spread. There also may be some spread when a person touches a surface or object that has virus on it and then touches his or her own mouth, nose or possibly their eyes. Spread of SARS and MERS between people has generally occurred between close contacts. There is much more to learn about 2019-nCoV, and investigations are ongoing.

What are the symptoms of 2019-nCoV?

Patients with 2019-nCoV have reportedly had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

What are severe complications from this virus?

Many patients have pneumonia in both lungs.

How can I help protect myself?

This virus is not spreading in most countries right now, but the best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus. There are simple everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses. These include the following:

- Avoid close contact with people who are unwell.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- 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 sanitiser.

How can I help protect others?

If you are unwell, follow these tips to keep from spreading respiratory illness to others:

- Stay home when you are feeling ill.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the rubbish.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

What should I do if I recently travelled to China and got ill?

If you were in China within the past 14 days and feel ill with fever, cough or difficulty breathing, you should get medical care. Call the office of your healthcare provider before you go, and tell them about your travel and your symptoms. They will give you instructions on how to get care without exposing other people to your illness. While unwell, avoid contact with people, don't go out and delay any travel to reduce the possibility of spreading illness to others.

Is there a vaccine?

There is currently no vaccine to protect against 2019-nCoV. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus.

Is there a treatment?

There is no specific antiviral treatment for 2019-nCoV. People with 2019-nCov can seek medical care to help relieve symptoms.

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2020, January). *Novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) and you*. Retrieved 27 January 2020 from https://www.cdc.gov