

CDC Daily Key Points
Coronavirus Disease 2019 (“COVID-19”) Outbreak
February 28, 2020

All content updated since February 26 is shown in [colored text](#).

MAIN KEY POINTS

- There is an expanding global outbreak of respiratory illness named “COVID-19” caused by a novel (new) coronavirus.
- The outbreak began in China but has spread to a growing number of countries internationally, including the United States.
- COVID-19 is threatening to cause a pandemic.
- The U.S. public health response is aggressive and multi-layered, with the goal of detecting introductions of this virus in the United States and reducing the potential spread and impact of this virus.
- This aggressive response has resulted in a limited number of U.S. cases in the United States.
- But as the virus continues to spread, it becomes harder and harder to keep the virus outside of the United States.
- The U.S. expects more introductions of COVID-19, in addition to some person-to-person spread of this virus.
- Aggressive containment efforts will continue, including ongoing use of isolation and quarantine measures to decrease introductions and spread of the virus.
- Other measure may be implemented too, depending on local circumstances, including Nonpharmaceutical Interventions.
- [Nonpharmaceutical Interventions \(NPIs\)](#) are actions, apart from getting vaccinated and taking medicine, that people and communities can take to help slow the spread of illnesses like pandemic flu or COVID-19.
- [The purpose of most NPIs is to help reduce spread of illness by maintaining or increasing distance between people.](#)
- [Social distancing measures are an important weapon to fight the spread of this virus and also can reduce the impact of this virus on communities as a whole.](#)
- The potential public health threat posed by COVID-19 is high, both globally and to the United States.
- But individual risk is dependent on exposure.
- For the general American public, who are unlikely to be exposed to this virus at this time, the immediate health risk from COVID-19 is low.
- Under current circumstances, certain people will have an increased risk of infection.
 - For example, healthcare workers caring for patients with COVID-19 and other close contacts of persons with COVID-19.
- CDC has developed guidance to help in the risk assessment and management of people with potential exposures to COVID-19.
- While still taking every effort to prevent a pandemic, CDC is operationalizing all of its pandemic preparedness and response plans.

- [Guidance](#) developed in anticipation of an influenza pandemic is being repurposed and adapted for COVID-19.
- Public health partners are encouraged to review their pandemic preparedness plans at this time.

SITUATION UPDATE

- To date, [57](#) international locations (including the U.S.) have reported confirmed cases of COVID-19, [most recently Belarus, Lithuania, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria and San Marino](#).
- CDC is reviewing and updating its travel guidance daily.
- To date, CDC has issued:
 - [Level 3 Travel Health Notices \(Avoid Nonessential Travel\)](#) for China, Iran, Italy, and South Korea.
 - Level 2 Travel Health Notices (Practice Enhanced Precautions) for Japan.
 - Level 1 Travel Health Notices (Practice Usual Precautions) for Hong Kong.
- CDC also recommends that all travelers reconsider cruise ship voyages into or within Asia at this time.
 - This is consistent with [guidance by the U.S. State Department](#).
- This is a rapidly evolving situation. CDC is constantly reviewing and updating its guidance as needed.
- CDC is reporting confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the United States in two categories:
 1. Cases detected through our domestic public health systems, and
 2. Cases among people who were repatriated via U.S. State Department flights from Wuhan, China and from the *Diamond Princess* cruise ship (Japan).
- [16](#) cases of COVID-19 have been detected through U.S. public health surveillance.
 - [Four](#) of these cases occurred through person-to-person spread.
 - On February 26, [CDC confirmed](#) what is potentially the first instance of community spread with the virus that causes COVID in [Sacramento, CA](#).
 - [A second possible instance of community-acquired COVID-19 was announced by Santa Clara, California on February 28.](#)
 - [It's possible both of these cases could be instances of community spread of COVID-19.](#)
 - [Community spread means spread of an illness for which the source of infection is unknown.](#)
 - [It's also possible, however, that these patients may have been exposed to a returned traveler who was infected.](#)
 - [CDC is supporting investigations in both communities.](#)
 - [People who were exposed to these two patients during their infection are at some level of risk depending on their exposure.](#)
 - [Based on what we know about how this virus behaves, we expect that we will find additional cases among people who have had contact with these patients, especially those who have had close, prolonged contact.](#)
 - [This could include family members and potentially healthcare workers who cared for the patient.](#)
 - [All the remaining cases detected through the U.S. public health system were in persons who had travel to China.](#)

- 47 cases of COVID-19 have been detected among the 1,100+ people repatriated from Hubei Province, China and the *Diamond Princess*.
 - 3 people were repatriated from Wuhan.
 - 44 people were repatriated from the Diamond Princess, an increase of 2 since yesterday.
- Almost all of the people from the Wuhan flights who were quarantined have finished their 14-day quarantine period.
- On Monday, most of the passengers from the Diamond Princess will complete their 14-day quarantine period.
- Patients who tested positive during their quarantine will remain in isolation.

WHAT'S NEW:

- On February 28 CDC issued a health alert network update titled: [“Update and Interim Guidance on Outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\).”](#)
- CDC has been watching the increased spread of this virus across the world and worked with partners on an updated PUI definition.
- The updated PUI definition takes into account the new geographic spread of the virus and includes a list of affected areas with widespread or sustained community spread. This list is dynamic and will change as our travel guidance is revised.
- CDC has posted [“Community Mitigation Guidance for COVID-19 Response in the United States: Nonpharmaceutical Interventions for Community Preparedness and Outbreak Response.”](#)

WHAT TO DO

- While the immediate risk of this new virus to the American public is believed to be low at this time, everyone can do their part to help us respond to this emerging public health threat:
 - It's currently flu and respiratory disease season and CDC recommends getting a flu vaccine, taking everyday preventive actions to help stop the spread of germs, and taking flu antivirals if prescribed.
 - If you are a healthcare provider, be on the look-out for people with who recently traveled from China and fever and respiratory symptoms.
 - If you are a healthcare provider caring for a COVID-19 patient or a public health responder, please take care of yourself and follow recommended infection control procedures.
 - If you have been in China or have been exposed to someone sick with COVID-19 in the last 14 days, you will face some limitations on your movement and activity. Please follow instructions during this time. Your cooperation is integral to the ongoing public health response to try to slow spread of this virus. If you develop COVID-19 symptoms, contact your healthcare provider, and tell them about your symptoms and your travel or exposure to a COVID-19 patient.
 - For people who have had close contact with someone with COVID-19 who develop symptoms, contact your healthcare provider, and tell them about your symptoms and your exposure to a COVID-19 patient.
 - For people who are ill with COVID-19, please follow CDC guidance on how to reduce the risk of spreading your illness to others. This guidance is on the CDC website.

TESTING

- An important part of CDC's role in testing during a public health emergency is to develop a test for the pathogen and equip state and local public health labs with the capacity to test for this virus.
- Distribution of a CDC rRT-PCR test to diagnose COVID-19 began to state and local public health labs, but shortly thereafter performance issues were identified related to a problem in the manufacturing of one of the reagents which led to laboratories not being able to verify the test performance.
- CDC worked on two potential resolutions to this problem.
- CDC developed a new protocol that uses two of the three components of the original CDC test kit to detect the virus that causes COVID-19.
- CDC established that the third component, which was the problem with the original test, can be excluded from testing without affecting accuracy.
- CDC is working with FDA to amend the existing Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for the test, but in the meantime, FDA granted discretionary authority for the use of the original test kits.
- Public health laboratories can use the original CDC test kit to test for the virus that causes COVID-19 using the new protocol.
- Further, newly manufactured kits have been provided to the International Reagent Resource for distribution.
- Combined with other reagents that CDC has procured, this is enough testing kits to test more than 75,000 people.
- In addition, CDC has two laboratories conducting testing for the virus that causes COVID-19. CDC can test approximately 350 specimens per day.
- Commercial labs are working to develop their own tests and hopefully will be available soon. This will allow a greater number of tests to happen close to where potential cases are.
- Learn more information about [CDC's laboratory work](#).

NONPHARMACEUTICAL INTERVENTIONS

- Nonpharmaceutical Interventions (NPIs) are actions, apart from getting vaccinated and taking medicine, that people and communities can take to help slow the spread of illnesses like pandemic flu or COVID-19.
- NPIs are also known as community mitigation strategies.
- When a new virus spreads among people, causing illness worldwide, it is called a pandemic.
- Because the virus is new, the human population has little or no immunity against it. This allows the virus to spread quickly from person to person worldwide.
- NPIs are among the best ways of controlling a pandemic caused by a respiratory virus when vaccines are not yet available.
- NPIs are grouped in three categories:
 1. personal NPIs (personal protective measures for everyday use and personal protective measures reserved for influenza pandemics);
 2. community NPIs (social distancing measures and school closures and dismissals); and
 3. environmental NPIs (surface cleaning measures)

- View [information about NPIs](#) and [factors to consider before implementing nonpharmaceutical interventions](#).

BACKGROUND

- This new coronavirus has been named “SARS-CoV-2;” the disease it causes has been named COVID-19.
- Due to potential for confusion with SARS-CoV, where possible, public communications will use “the virus that causes COVID-19.”

For more information please visit the Coronavirus Disease 2019 Outbreak Page at:
www.cdc.gov/COVID19.